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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
NOTES OF THE WEEK	637	MIDDLE ARTICLES (continued):	
LEADING ARTICLES:		A Discourse of "The Double	
The Cloak of Political Motive	640	Game."—II. By John Palmer	647
The Party Position	641	An Independent. By Filon Young	648
The State and the Railways	641	The International Flower Show	649
Muddling on in Africa	643	Mr. Masfield's Poems. By J. E.	
THE CITY	643	Barton	650
INSURANCE:		The Clocksmith. By John Halsham	652
International Life Office Expenditure	644	CORRESPONDENCE:	
SPECIAL ARTICLE:		Britain and the Monroe Doctrine. By	
An Angelic Illusion. By Arthur A.		H. S. Bunbury	653
Baumann	644	Italy in Tripoli. By William Mercer	654
MIDDLE ARTICLES:		"Parliamentary Reminiscences." By	
A Musical War. By John F. Runci-		H. D. Ellis	654
man	646	The Suffragette in Greek. By M. C.	
		O'Byrne J. P. and another	655
		"Be British!"	655
		CORRESPONDENCE (continued):	
		What was Shakespeare? By	
		Harold P. Cooke	656
		"The Inconstant Moon"	656
		The Academy. By P. A. Vaile	656
		Spiritism and Immorality. By Bridget	
		M. O'Reilly	656
		VERSE:	
		Indignata sub Umbras	656
		REVIEWS:	
		"May I Say So?"	657
		Persian Travel and Research	657
		Katharine and Mary Grey	658
		Bret Harte's Quarry	659
		The Fourth Gospel	660
		"Infinite Dispute"	661
		SHORTER NOTICES	662

"SATURDAY PORTRAITS." *The first of these portraits appeared last week: the subject was Sir Rufus Isaacs K.C. M.P. The second will appear next week; the subject being Sir Horace Plunkett.*

We beg to state that we decline to return or to enter into correspondence as to rejected communications; and to this rule we can make no exception. Manuscripts not acknowledged within four weeks are rejected.

NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The officers' story at Lord Mersey's Inquiry this week of how the "Titanic" sank was very moving. Mr. Lightoller's account, perfectly simple, clear, direct, is a "human document" if there ever was one. We do not know whether it is good copy from a newspaper point of view or only fairly good; but we do know that material so deeply interesting and significant rarely indeed finds its way on to any printed page. Take the most vaunted books of this publishing season: is there one which holds a thing so stirring as this record of the second officer? We should say that there is nothing in the literature of the moment to touch it. It is a thousand times more interesting, and it throws far more light on human character and action than the most exciting page in any novel, popular or unpopular, to-day.

Pot valour finds little encouragement in the language of these witnesses. They did their duty without the least parade; and the more one examines into the real story of the disaster the clearer it grows that crew and passengers—with few notable exceptions—set an example in good conduct to the world. Mr. Lightoller, who saw what was going on to the end, and is a plain, straight man, described the discipline all round as "splendid". Weighing the words well, we can say that the sinking of the "Titanic" is one of the greatest disasters but one of the truest glories of England for many years past. We shall not fail as a nation whilst we can hold ourselves as those people did.

When Lady Duff-Gordon was examined by Mr. Duke on Monday she had some interesting things to say about two newspapers. One was an American newspaper named the "Sunday American", the other an English newspaper named the "Daily News". Articles appeared in these organs which were signed "By Lady Duff-Gordon". Lady Duff-Gordon very plainly stated that she had not written these articles and that most of the things in them attributed to her were false. We do not know the "Sunday American", but we recall some lines by Crabbe on the "Monitor", also, if we recall aright, a Sunday organ of opinion:

"The fresh coined lie, the secret whispered last
And all the gleanings of the six days past."

As to the "Daily News", presumably it has by now explained to all its readers' and admirers' satisfaction how it came to publish an article signed Lady Duff-Gordon which Lady Duff-Gordon never wrote. Was there not also an article in the "Star" signed Lady Duff-Gordon? Was that also not by Lady Duff-Gordon? After all there were advantages in the old newspaper style of unsigned articles! We have quoted Crabbe. Perhaps the whole of his poem "The Newspaper" might be read usefully in this matter; it is by no means so out of date.

There was a debate more or less on the "Titanic" in the House of Commons before Parliament rose; and we can welcome a good speech by a Radical M.P. Mr. Holt, the member for Hexham, actually dared to say that steamship companies must be run on commercial lines. Fancy that! Does Mr. Holt think of seeking re-election, we wonder? The Humanitarians and the Sentimentalists and the Syndicalists will surely all band together and invade his constituency. Radicals must not talk about things being run on commercial lines—even Conservatives may get into grave trouble by such frankness. The idea now is that every man should have his lifebelt close at hand—we are not sure he ought not to sleep in it—and every man his seat secure in a lifeboat. It may soon be a case of state saloons for the steerage.

Mr. Bonar Law's speeches will be worth binding one day, which is more than one can say for the speeches

of most statesmen, living and dead. The truth is they are nothing if not "good reading", and good to hear too. There is always such keenness and bite about them. But perhaps the chief virtue is the entire absence from them, one and all, of periphrasis—that which for two centuries of party history has apparently been esteemed a virtue. His speech at Glasgow was first-class of its kind. Mr. Bonar Law is the most convincing perhaps by far of all Tariff Reform experts. We fancy he is gradually bringing in many of the honest doubters. He draws from a great experience of business and has unfailing common sense; and he is beyond doubt intellectual, too, without being what is termed with discreet vagueness "an intellectualist". Tariff Reform under a man like Mr. Bonar Law should mean safety for all.

Mr. Bonar Law, by the way, made light of Mr. Lloyd George's saying that, if all the money in the country were divided equally, every man would have £200 a year. It seems, however, to have escaped notice that on the strength of this calculation Mr. Lloyd George proceeded to give every member of Parliament just double his right share!

Mr. Lloyd George probably recognises that no man can live on £200 a year nowadays: it is below the right minimum wage, he has felt as a Cabinet Minister; and, far from securing its owner "half the good things that make life worth living", according to Mr. Snowden, it will not—with a Radical Government in power and prices of all the necessities of life up—secure him a fraction of them.

Mr. Masterman told the House of Commons on Wednesday that "the most friendly and amicable negotiations were at present proceeding between the representatives of the doctors on the Advisory Committee and the Insurance Commissioners". Nevertheless, said Mr. Masterman, these negotiations are of so extremely delicate a nature that a word as to what is really happening might ruin everything. Doctors or no doctors, the Act will certainly come into operation in July. Mr. Masterman told the House that, if hundreds of thousands of persons did not know their position in July, the Government "would not be in the least surprised or dismayed". The Government, in fact, are going to thrust the Act upon them as soon as possible; because, when once the Act is in operation, they will be compelled to find out what it means.

Mr. Lloyd George thinks it easier in this insurance hubbub to pick holes in the other side than to defend his own. Mr. Steel Maitland has recently questioned some of Mr. Lloyd George's statements about the Insurance Act; and on Tuesday Mr. Lloyd George answered him in a letter to the "Times". "I would only say", wrote Mr. George, "that aspersions on the veracity of my statements with reference to the Insurance Act come very ill from the pen of a member of a party under whose auspices an unparalleled campaign of mendacity on the same subject has been organised during the past few months." Mr. Lloyd George does not crush the "lie". He returns it to Mr. Maitland with a bow. It is easy give-and-take with the "lie" in politics to-day:

"Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
Ha!
Swounds, I should take it; for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-livered, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter.

At last, with the Radicals in office, we have a bit of retrenchment and economy. But, alas, it does not, after all, come through the Government pledged to economy, though it is a House of Commons reform. The Kitchen Committee has cut down the shilling Parliamentary dinner. Henceforth the politician may dine wisely, if not too well, for a shilling a head, but the public will not pay the bill. We note the "West-

minster Gazette" expresses its deep approval of this reform. Yes, but is not the Chairman of the Kitchen Committee a good Tory? This strikes us as a case of the Whigs trying to steal the clothes of the Tories, the dinner clothes.

Mr. Churchill won his libel action, and he very well deserved to win it. The lines in the magazine that attributed cowardice downright to him and dishonourable conduct as a soldier were bad in fact; and we can agree with Mr. Justice Darling that they were bad in fiction too. Chaff is one thing—most of us have dared at some time or other to indulge in that about Mr. Churchill's exploits in the world of action: and it can even be pointed—chaff often is. But these foolish verses were quite another thing. The editor was extraordinarily unfortunate in not having read them in time to reject them.

South Hackney has given us the singular spectacle of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Bottomley as fellow company promoters. The Liberal party and the Government are happy indeed in securing such a powerful partner, who brought to them at Hackney his large following.

Mr. Balfour—"partly as a politician, partly as a philosopher"—writes in the June number of "Nord und Sud" of Anglo-German relations. The article is a model of the style in which big international questions should be treated. The touch of philosophy—turning a statement of a politician into the utterance of a statesman—will certainly appeal to Mr. Balfour's German readers. Mr. Balfour nowhere shirks the difficult places of his subject. But in spite of the firmness and honesty with which he states "the English point of view"—or because of it—there is scarcely a sentence to which a patriotic German could possibly take exception, or a phrase that he could misread. The article is vividly in contrast with a contribution by Lord Haldane. Lord Haldane would seem to argue that misunderstanding between Goethe's country and Shakespeare's is unthinkable.

Sir Edward Grey now has the full report of the trial of Miss Malecka. Meantime her friends would be well advised to let the matter rest. Many questions put this week in the House of Commons are instinct, not so much with friendship for Miss Malecka as with enmity and suspicion towards Russia. Russia has every right to resent, and every incentive to ignore, the outcry of persons who never let slip an opportunity of showing their hostility. Whether the Law Officers will instruct the Government to interfere is doubtful. The Russian Government assert that Miss Malecka is a Russian, as well as a British, subject; and the double nationality, if admitted, adds considerably to the difficulty of interference.

Germany has been robbed of its promised sensation. The Reichstag had looked forward to a first-class debate on the Emperor's warning to the Mayor of Strassburg. Had he broken his pledge given after the crisis of November 1908, and was the Alsatian Constitution in any danger? The whole thing was spoilt by the Socialists, who found it convenient to make out a case against the Prussian franchise, and a very abusive case too. The Government had no difficulty in securing the sympathy of the House in their protests against the attacks on the leading State of the Empire, with whose internal affairs the Reichstag has no concern. The Socialists then made matters worse by attacking the Emperor himself. The only result of the episode is that there is now a breach between the two wings of the Left, and the position of the Government is thus strengthened. The majority against it is a paper majority only.

Diplomatic changes may mean a great deal, as we have ourselves lately been reminded, and there certainly seems to be something behind the retirement of the French Ambassador to St. Petersburg. French and Russian views of foreign policy do not quite coincide just now. The Russian entente with Italy, originally formed to guard against the by no means pressing danger of an Austrian move on Salonika, has gained in

importance through the Italian captures in the Ægean. It is possible, for instance, that the retention of Rhodes would win Italy's consent to the opening of the Dardanelles. France, however, has her hands quite full in Morocco, and is little inclined to support an adventurous policy in the Eastern Mediterranean. Hence a certain amount of friction for which the Ambassador bears the blame.

Mr. Roosevelt, by capturing Ohio, the President's own State, seems to have destroyed Mr. Taft's chances of a second term. After the "adjunct" letter we cannot pretend to be sorry. Whether Mr. Roosevelt will himself go back to the White House is still an open question. Many orthodox Republicans hate him, and there is a good deal of non-party feeling against a third-term candidature. The ex-President's best chance lies in the failure of the Democrats to find a good candidate. He will thus poll some of the Democratic vote. Moreover, Mr. Roosevelt is winning ground, and the average Yankee likes to feel he is on the winning side.

Mr. Hull resigned the Finance portfolio in the Botha Ministry because he held the innocent but not unnatural view that the man who is responsible for finance should be consulted in regard to expenditure. Mr. Sauer, as Minister for the Railways, on the other hand, seems to have thought that railway policy was a matter to be decided on his own initiative, whatever the cost. Mr. Hull says the Cabinet, in other words the Finance Minister, was kept in the dark by Mr. Sauer, and Mr. Sauer replies that the Cabinet was informed and that his action was quite constitutional. The flat contradiction of these two statements placed Mr. Botha in a dilemma when appealed to in the House of Assembly. He adopted the safe course of declaring both to be right. The disputants look at matters from different standpoints. All that the affair really proves is that the South African Government has been run in water-tight compartments and that Mr. Botha has neglected on this occasion to assert himself. Possibly there was method in his slackness.

New Zealand's instant agreement to the Admiralty's suggestion that her Dreadnought cruiser should be stationed in the North Sea instead of in the Pacific makes one hope that the Colonies are beginning to grasp the essential principles of naval defence. The cruiser will now take its place with other ships of its class and date, instead of being isolated among inferior boats on the other side of the world. New Zealand has thus recognised that the true defence of the Empire is at the centre and not at the circumference. The effort of a certain section of the German Press to see in this arrangement a new menace is merely puerile. France might just as well ask Germany to show her friendship by placing her best troops at points where they would be least able to do efficient service. As with New Zealand, so with Canada. Under Mr. Borden's Government the Canadians abandon the idea of little Navy schemes in favour of a real contribution to the Imperial fleet.

There is trouble again at the London Docks, this time with the lightermen and their employers. But any sectional dispute, whether about wages or trade unionism is at once taken up nowadays by a central body. Thus, the Transport Workers' Federation has already taken over the dispute; and has at a blow decided to call out 100,000 men. The whole body of dock workers of every class—lightermen, dockers, carmen, and others—may and will as circumstances direct be called into the strike zone. Already this has gone on so far that cargoes are lying on the quays undealt with, and the food supply is threatened. The London and Suburban Traders' Federation have brought the necessity of protection for those willing to work to the attention of the Government.

What has been done so far is to appoint Sir Edward Clarke to hold an inquiry into the present dispute, but in Mr. McKenna's words, not a roving inquiry. This means that it will probably not inquire into the question of trade unionism and non-trade unionism in the Port. Not only lightermen's wages are in dispute, but the wider question of trade unionists determined to refuse to work with non-unionists or to help forward any work where they are employed. According to Mr. Harry Gosling of the Transport Workers' Federation, this is a point of "the present dispute" which Sir Edward Clarke cannot deal with, and it is the point which matters most.

The Government is to be required by the Miners' Federation of Great Britain to alter the Minimum Wage Act. The Federation has been sitting in London during the week considering the reports from the districts that are dissatisfied with the awards of the Chairmen of the Boards under the Act. Lord S. Aldwyn's interpretation of it in South Wales brings the minimum wage below five shillings for day workers in the mines. The Act is ambiguous as to the basis of average wages which is to be taken for the minimum wage. Lord S. Aldwyn takes certain price lists; the miners say the average earnings on those price lists ought to be taken as some Chairmen have done, and they ask the Government for an Act interpreting in this sense.

Mr. Asquith, they say, made it very clear during the discussions on the Bill that he expected and intended five shillings to be fixed as the lowest point for the minimum wage. The Government would not directly put five shillings into the Act, but if it accepts the miners' views it gets it into the Act indirectly. There will not be another strike unless and until the Government refuses an amended Act. If it agrees, then in all probability the Employers' Federation will come along with the declaration that there will be a lockout. The prospect is gloomy for the consumer, and bright for none but the speculator.

The Government's difficulties with the miners have not disposed Mr. Asquith, at any rate, to rush for a remedy to nationalisation. The railways would inevitably be the first to go; but Mr. Asquith, replying to a deputation on Monday, did not think the case had yet been made. Mr. Asquith was perhaps merely smoothing the deputation when he contended that nationalisation was rather a question of degree than of principle. It is true that the railways are to a certain extent regulated by Act of Parliament; but so are factories and workshops. The difference between State-regulation and State-ownership is more than a difference of degree.

We fancy the public will take the complaints and grievances of the Suffragettes about not being treated as first-class misdemeanants very calmly. And this is really the only point that can be raised, as there was no vestige of defence from start to finish. It was burlesque to argue that the Government and not themselves were conspirators. They had no case—and they abused the prosecutor. Sir Rufus Isaacs explained his appearance not to the importance of the Suffragettes as political offenders, but because he alone, and not the Government, was responsible for the prosecution. Nothing in the trial helped the Suffragette movement. Prison for breaking windows does not make Suffragette martyrs; it does not even make them politicians. Tom Mann's and the Suffragette trials have had at least one thing in common; the absence of common sense in the talk about free expression of opinion and political offences.

Messrs. Lyons have placed all cat-keepers under an obligation, especially all shop and restaurant keepers who need cats to catch mice. They have obtained a reversal of the decision of the County Court at Westminster giving Mrs. Clinton £100 damages. The dramatis personæ were Messrs. Lyons' cat with kittens, the heroine in the case, Mrs. Clinton's dog, and Mrs. Clinton herself, who unfortunately, in a mêlée between cat and dog, was bitten by the cat. The Court

has decided practically that the liability of cat-keeping is the same as for dog-keeping. Neither is so dangerous as to make the owner absolutely responsible by merely keeping them for injuries they may do. He must have knowledge that the individual animal was dangerous. A cat is not transformed into a dangerous animal by having kittens.

The depositors are to come last in the distribution of the assets of the Birkbeck Building Society, which they took to be a bank. The long statement of the Senior Official Receiver they have received regards the failure as due not only to a severe fall in the market value of trustee securities, but also to "a lack of banking experience and skill on the part of the directors". A notable feature of the expenditure is that of the needlessly elaborate building where the society carried on its business. The new bank premises were built in 1900 at a cost (including site) of about £710,000. Among the assets the bank buildings are returned as of the value of £435,092 odd, and have been disposed of after arbitration at £311,029. The loss here is severe, and it is high time that some check was put on reckless building to attract public attention.

Sir Julius Wernher is a real loss to this country. Had all, or indeed many, of the South African magnates been of his quality, we should have had none of the sharp, though not entirely unjustifiable, criticism of their influence which has been so common in London. Sir Julius Wernher was a big man every way. He was big enough to make an immense fortune, to win a considerable name and a baronetcy, without forgetting, or wishing to forget, the humble German township whence he came. The splendid entertainments at Bath House could always find room for old and less successful friends, as well as ambassadors and the great world generally. One would hardly have guessed from his bluff, genial outward manner that the big rough Teuton was a man of varied and most delicate culture—a lover of books and good pictures and old ivories, one who loved them for themselves, not merely as furniture, or as the right thing. Seldom has fine enterprise of any kind found a better friend than Julius Wernher.

Mr. Balfour's address to the Art Collections Fund's meeting was not inspiring. It acknowledged at the start that the future position of the nation, as regards artistic possession and culture, was at stake, and that the annual grant of £5000 to the National Gallery was "ludicrous". This foolish sum is ludicrous merely as the Gallery's ordinary income; it is unspeakable in connexion with the more immediate pressing need for securing the half-dozen indispensable masterpieces yet left in England. But Mr. Balfour apparently was not hopeful of its increase, and seemed to think that the national question of safeguarding the country's cultured education must, in the first place, be the business of a private body.

Obviously the £5000 grant is not enough for ordinary needs if our Gallery is to take its proper place. The extraordinary demands, however, are the pressing need. Where is the emergency fund that once established and safely banked will meet them. We talk of it once a year, and then let it drop, while the danger of losing indispensable treasures creeps nearer. Private generosity, such as King Edward's, and the Government's liberal acceptance of its responsibilities could lay this danger permanently, in a few months. Then the question of a decent income for the Gallery might be settled.

One does not expect to hear from Mr. Balfour, at such a meeting, that British art was insignificant before the popular Reynolds era. We may be ignorant of our splendid early record, but surely some have heard of English and Irish artists supplying the Continent with illuminated manuscripts and incomparable embroideries; of the Westminster frescoes, of English ivories and miniatures, second perhaps only to Holbein's. The Walpole Society will be indignant.

THE CLOAK OF POLITICAL MOTIVE.

IT would be hard to beat the sophistries, intentional or merely stupid, which have accumulated round the cases of the suffragists and Tom Mann. Nobody who gives a few minutes' unbiassed consideration to the question of political motive would seriously maintain the propositions which the suffragist prisoners put forward at the Old Bailey or Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and Mr. Keir Hardie in the House of Commons as to the sentences on the "Syndicalist" group. To do so it would be necessary that one should be an obsessed suffragist oneself, or an advocate who is bound when his clients get into trouble to find objections to their punishment without considering their rationality. Only under a compulsion of this kind is it possible to understand how a man of Mr. Ramsay Macdonald's intelligence could defend Tom Mann's incitement to mutiny as being purely an expression of the opinion expressed constantly in Christian churches that men should not kill each other. Such an absurdity is best left for refutation to a jury of sensible men; and it is not the law but twelve ordinary men who have treated it with the contempt it deserves. Neither in such a case as Mann's, nor in that of the suffragists, is there any harsh rule of law laid down by Judges which the public sentiment resents as unsuitable to the feeling of the times. Juries used to be a defence to the expression of opinion on various matters, and a protection against Government prosecutions where political motives took some form of activity which was not condemned by the popular conscience. It was a jury who said that Mann was not expressing an opinion, but doing an act against the law which they disapproved of as a form of activity with which they had no sympathy. So also a jury finds that the suffragists either conspired to destroy the property of citizens or did actually destroy it. As representatives of the common sense they do not feel called on to protect any supposed interests of the community by refusing to find these things as facts. Political agitators in these times do not find sufficient the protection of the trial by jury with which their predecessors were satisfied. They demand that the Judge shall lay down the rule that an "expression of opinion" such as Mann's cannot be a breach of law and should be withdrawn from the consideration of the jury. Or, as the suffragists, they claim that a political motive is, what no other motive can be, a ground for ruling that a destroyer of property is not an offender. But what is there in the political motive that entitles it to be placed in a category apart and given a virtue the English law does not allow to any other motive?

Put it that the "political motive" were pleaded for Mann's offence of inciting soldiers to mutiny. Can it be said that the country is prepared for a law that it is a crime to incite to mutiny from any motive but a political motive? The absurdity of supposing this is obvious; the danger of subverting the allegiance of the Army is what the citizens are concerned with, and not with the motive of the subverter. So, unless the case for private property were given up altogether, how can one person be allowed to destroy the property of another with impunity, whatever his motive may be? Logically it would be as proper to argue that political motive would excuse murder, if the victim were a Sovereign or a statesman and he were murdered for that reason by a Republican or an Anarchist. It would be utterly unworkable to place political motive on a different legal footing from other motives.

Mr. Ramsay Macdonald attempts to define a principle of punishment in a case like that of Mann's, if he cannot be got off either on the expression of opinion plea or of the political motive plea. He suggests the test ought to be the possibility of the offence being repeated. This we admit is a serious matter for the Judge in fixing a sentence or for the Home Secretary in reconsidering it. As for the Judge, whatever mitigating circumstance there may be in a "political motive"—the claim made for it being that it excludes more or less the ordinary brutal selfishness of crime—this was taken into account both in the Mann case and the suffragist case. But in the suffragist case there

could be no occasion for leniency on the ground of any probability that the offence would not be repeated. The Judge distinctly stated that this could not possibly influence him in his sentence, as no regret had been expressed for the offence; and whatever restraining influence a sharp punishment might have was necessary with people who gloried in what they had done and would give no promise about discontinuing it for the future. How, then, could the Judge concede their plea for treatment as first-class misdemeanants? To make a punishment nominal by reducing everything disagreeable in it, except mere detention, he might at least expect them to promise so much. They would make no concession to induce him to exercise his discretion in their favour; and he was surely entitled to take this obstinacy into consideration. The Home Secretary has to meet the same difficulty in both the Mann and the suffragist cases. He is a politician, and political sentences may be treated in different ways, according to the Government that happens to be in office. His position reminds us of what Adam Smith said of the statesman, a political animal of whom purely rational conclusions cannot be predicted. And punishments are in any case not mathematically determinable, as is constantly found where the Court of Criminal Appeal revises and mitigates the sentences of Judges at trials. Mann and the suffragists might appeal against their sentences of imprisonment; but the opinion may be ventured that this is not worth their trying. Unless there is something against Judges which cannot be corrected by appeal, it is well for the Home Secretary himself to leave sentences as the Judges impose them. It is hardly worth while dogmatizing about what he ought or ought not to do with the suffragists so long as he does not interfere to avert substantial punishment from these serious offenders who had not a scrap of legal defence. In Mann's case, however, he has already gone far enough.

THE PARTY POSITION.

THE country to-day is not speculating as to whether the Unionists will come in next time: all that concerns it is the precise time which Ministerialists will choose for facing their débâcle, or the exact moment when events will force them to face the country. Every by-election is a memento mori. The Government is damned already by the electorate; the only question is when precisely will it choose to die.

Its last two efforts have indeed been praiseworthy, so far as they were directed to the fulfilment of obsolete pledges forced on them by Irish and Welsh recalcitrance to further delay, rather than to any desire to meet present popular needs. Everybody knew that Home Rule and Welsh Disestablishment were unpopular—but Ministers preferred unpopularity to Dissolution. This is the inner history of the present session.

As far as Home Rule is concerned, the Cabinet started out on their campaign under a great misapprehension, chiefly due to Lord Pirrie and his few Liberal friends in Ulster. Ministers were told that Ulster did not mean business and would never fight. In consequence the Liberal Press and the utterances of subordinate office-holders were full of derision of the possibilities of trouble in the North. On this view of events the carrying of Home Rule was postponed to within three months of the last possible date of the next General Election. Since this original blunder, for which Lord Pirrie is mainly responsible, the true facts of the case have penetrated Ministerial minds, and a state of panic has followed—hence the conciliatory speech of Mr. Winston Churchill on the Home Rule Bill. The Government have realised that to force Home Rule on Ulster three months before a General Election is to invite disaster at the polls.

The Welsh Disestablishment Bill has proved even more disastrous for the Government. Liberals have ceased to believe in the existence of Liberal Churchmen. When they used Nonconformity to get them in 1906 to help them repeal the Education Act of Mr. Balfour they thought they had abolished the Liberal Churchman

for ever and won an election in spite of him. Now it appears that they were wrong, and the results of their error are upon them. During the last sitting of Parliament report after report has been coming in from the Liberal agents announcing the wholesale defection of Liberals on the Church issue: Hence the alarm in Liberal circles, the abstentions or hostile votes of Liberals in the House of Commons, the talk of concessions on Disendowment in Committee, the annoyance at Mr. Lloyd George's venomous speech, and the general collapse of the whole proposal. The Bill certainly will not be passed this year—possibly it may be dropped altogether. The truth is that the age of materialism has passed with the advent of materialistic conditions of life. Neither popular sentiment nor intellectual theory will consent under any terms to the turning of spiritual endowments to the creation of washing-houses under a county council. The Government had better drop the Bill; it is dead in any case, because it is in essence opposed to the spirit of the new age. We really have no time to-day to worry about Baptist vendettas against the Church of England. Let the Nonconformists pluck out secular atheism from their own eye before proclaiming the mote of Establishment in the eye of their opponents.

The real issue lies far beyond all these ancient programmes of Newcastle and the 'nineties. Who is going to deal with labour unrest? What Government or what party has a programme or a solution here? It is this question which rules the political field. The Radicals have attempted the solution and failed—for the unrest continues. Like Jason they have sown the dragon's teeth of class hatred and unlike Jason have proved unable to slay the product of its efforts. On this issue—the particular field of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the country has lost all faith in Liberalism. It will be many years before Mr. Lloyd George is allowed to try his hand at Liberal social reform. He has had office and it has failed to show the man. The nation is thoroughly alarmed; it has tried Liberalism and found it wanting: will it put its trust in the Unionists for any length of time? The answer to this question entirely depends on the Unionist party. Unionist policy must firmly base itself upon the doctrines of Disraeli. It must be socially constructive under protection of a tariff, and devote itself to the fullest possible development of all the vast resources latent within the Empire. If Toryism will produce and fight for its constructive programme of Social, Imperial and Tariff Reform it will be able to form not merely a temporary Government based on a reaction against Radical failures, but a permanent Administration capable of carrying out all the great policies which are now needed by the State.

THE STATE AND THE RAILWAYS.

THE Prime Minister chose his time for receiving the deputation on the nationalisation of railways cleverly. By making the deputation coincide with the Postmaster-General's statement on the State telephones, Mr. Asquith made it seem natural to the public that the subject should be dealt with in a matter-of-fact way and that the ultimate question of the merits of State-ownership should not be raised. That is where he showed his cleverness. For the Ministerial coalition is far from unanimous on the matter of State-ownership. Some of its members, animated by a hatred of capital in private hands, have a strong a priori prejudice in favour of public control of industry, and especially of public services; others, and among them some of the most level-headed men in the Radical party, would be very reluctant to see the State become more directly associated with any one section of labour at a time when all labour is so restless. Nor is there unanimity among the Opposition.

To an average man it is clear that a strong paper case can be made out for public control of public services. Two points stand out at once. First, public services form an exception to the rule—or to what the text-books proclaim as the rule—that

industry is organised on a competitive basis. All the services, the railways among them, are more or less monopolies, and the influence of competition to lower prices is consequently inoperative. Very many people now agree that public services should not be altogether free of public control, and in the case of our railways this control takes the shape of the statutory regulation of fares. But there are many nowadays who regard this measure of control as inadequate. They are fascinated by the unity of management secured by State-ownership. It seems on the face of it so much more sensible that the railways of England should be under the direction of one mind instead of thirty or forty. A good deal of stress was laid on this point by one of the members of the deputation, but its economic soundness is very disputable. Put into the technical terms of modern economics, the argument is that a trust is better than a cartel. The British railways at present form a not very compact cartel. Taken over by the Government they would become a State-owned trust. As a fact, however, American and German business experience shows that not all industries can profitably be concentrated into trusts. In some cases it is found better to leave a good deal of freedom to the participants and some of the American trusts are really cartels.

The criticism suggests how it comes about that the case for State-ownership is often stronger on paper than in fact. The unified concern would be so vast that it would require a super-man as managing director, and super-men are not to be found among politicians or civil servants. Accordingly, if the service is to be managed at all, cast-iron rules must be made to apply to a multiplicity of details, and then follow complaints of over-centralisation and red-tape. No doubt, too, State-owned industries must be conducted on rather formal lines in order that Parliaments may see how they are run, and this means much minuting and the elaborate tabulation of facts. For these reasons State-ownership frequently fails to realise the anticipated economies and the profits which were to go to the relief of the taxpayer tend to disappear. The case of the Western Railway of France, strangely instanced by one of the advocates of nationalisation, is a good illustration of the defects of State-ownership in practice.

It is because the average man feels that the theory is better than the reality that he wants to consider each case on its merits. That is a sound procedure, but we must be careful what we mean by merits. It is not enough for a man to say that he has an open mind on the question of railway nationalisation as a business proposition if by "business" he means "financial". Monday's discussion showed pretty plainly that railway nationalisation could not pay in pounds, shillings and pence. The average dividend in 1911 was stated to be 3.66 per cent., and even the keenest nationalists only represented it as a fraction over 4 per cent. Suppose that the State took over the rails. It would presumably convert the present shareholders into holders of 3 per cent. stock, and a large fraction of the dividends is thus disposed of at once. Then there must be a fund for the redemption of stock. If it were fixed at the ridiculously low figure of one-half per cent.—which would mean that the State would really become owner of the railways two centuries hence—it would only leave the tiniest margin of profit available for the public. Out of that margin must be met all the contingencies of railway management, including the demand for higher wages, which we may be sure would be one of the first consequences of State purchase. Looking at the matter from this point of view the Prime Minister was fully justified in saying that the burden of proof had not been satisfactorily shouldered by the nationalists.

With the telephones so prominent, it was perhaps inevitable that the case of the railways should have been viewed from the commercial standpoint. But the State does not regard everything from that standpoint. It is not an organisation operating wholly, or even mainly, for a money profit, and because its wider interests were ignored in Monday's discussion neither the strongest argument for

nationalisation nor the strongest argument against it was then put forward. Railway nationalisation is a business proposition, in the larger sense of the words, because the State, and only the State, can run the railways with a single eye to the general welfare. In England the statutory fare averts some of the worst possibilities of monopolist selfishness, but even in England the railways are unconnected in the general policy. Take, as one example, the distribution of our population. It is agreed that our people should not be huddled into the towns and that the habitable area about the workshops should be as large as possible. In practice this means good communications, and if the English railways were State-owned there would now be an agitation for the improvement of suburban services. It is true that the companies have done a good deal in this direction in recent years. But that is not because they have been filled with eagerness to improve housing conditions. It is because they have had to face the competition of trams and motor-buses. Accident has, in fact, brought about the result at which the State would have aimed.

Take, again, the most conspicuous differences between the State-owned rails of Germany and the private rails of England. In Germany railway policy has been shaped with an eye to the proper development of German waterways. In England the railways bought up the canals in order to kill them. It is, of course, an arguable point that, in a small country where rapid access to ports is most desirable, it was better to concentrate on one form of transport. But it was certainly not on these grounds that the railways ate up the canals. Their aim was simply profit. Further, the Germans have made their rails a great instrument for pushing their foreign trade, arranging special freight rates for goods to be shipped out of the country. The English companies have never felt any special concern about this question. If freight rates are to be reduced in order to meet foreign competition, our companies would expect the reduction to be made by the steamship lines which carry the goods for the bulk of the distance. As for differential rates to stimulate a particular industry—market-gardening for instance—our rails have no need to consider them. In a manufacturing country like ours the transport of agricultural produce is a small item. But to the State, looking to the general wellbeing, the fostering of agriculture might well seem a necessity.

It is certain, then, that if controlled by the State the railways might become a very potent political instrument. On the other hand, there is the danger that the State could not be trusted to control the instrument. The "Westminster Gazette" has suggested that the House of Commons man would shudder at the idea of railway constituencies, dockyard constituencies being already bad enough. This is a curious inversion of the real danger. What makes us shudder is not the thought of the demands which the railway vote would make upon the House of Commons man, but the thought of the bribes which the House of Commons man would offer to the railway vote. Think of a Radical Ministry in danger of defeat at the polls. What easier way of escape than to produce some splendid bribe to the railwaymen for which the dukes could, on paper, be made to pay. It is expecting too much of human nature to assume that the party head of a public department controlling a vote which may well decide an election will not turn his position to party advantage. The question of the political status of Civil servants lies, indeed, at the very root of the controversy as to State-ownership. The drastic plan of disfranchisement, though adopted in some countries, is not feasible in England, and the alternative opens the way to corruption. There must be some middle course, but we have not found it yet; and while statesmanship is thus baffled, the general advantages of State-owned railways cannot appeal with decisive force.

MUDDLING ON IN AFRICA.

THERE have been sounder financiers than Mr. Hull, who has dropped his portfolio in the South African Ministry like a hot potato. He had a turn for extravagance and the vindictive not unworthy of our Mr. George. But we share the sincere regret with which General Botha bemoans his lost Treasurer, and fore-shadows reconstruction, for the simple reason that across the South Atlantic we perceive General Hertzog grinning. The Opposition have kept Mr. Botha going, preferring to renegade Englishmen a Dutchman who really means well, and can (occasionally) be squeezed into acting well. But "with them" were Mr. Smuts and Mr. Hull, and now only Mr. Smuts is left. It is an ill lookout for British interests, and that at a time when the British settlers in the Transvaal and Orange Free State are passing from the supervision of the Imperial Land Board under the direct control of the Union Government. The five years' grace which Lord Milner's action in the Lords wrung from the present Government has not in all cases sufficed to put the farmers on their feet. A man may have really turned the corner and be doing well, but still not have discharged the indebtedness of his early and most trying prentice years. And fears enough are entertained that there may in cases be foreclosing which an Imperial Land Board would never have dreamed of, with the extrusion of excellent British settlers who have made their farms out of the barest veld after ten years of heartbreaking effort, and whose only crime is that they are British. It is to be hoped that we may not be brought up against so miserable a scandal, for which the present Government would require treatment by sjambok. But the dread of it is distinctly nearer to "materialising" for the departure of Mr. Hull from the Botha Ministry.

Although it was "done in public", as Major Pendennis feared that Pen's plucking might have been, it is difficult to be quite clear why the Treasurer has fallen out of the coach. "Because of railways", says Mr. Hull, and because Mr. Sauer kept a-thwarting of him, having even incurred expenditure and amended rates affecting revenues in the largest and easiest manner without consulting his colleagues. But these things Mr. Sauer denied on the floor of the House, and while the Opposition, we are told, kept silent, "wonder and comment" are imputed (by Reuter) to the South African world, as it looks on. "Comment" may fairly come to this, that diamond cuts diamond when Mr. Sauer appears as one outraged by deviations from the Constitution. The Act of Union set its face against party politicians in power exercising patronage in Government appointments. And Mr. Sauer has kept all railway appointments in his own gift. On the other hand, the Act provided that all revenues raised from railways and harbours were to be kept apart from the Consolidated Fund, and spent on railways and harbours. The total earnings were not to be "more than are enough to meet the necessary outlays for building, maintenance, betterment, depreciation, and the payment of interest due on capital contributed out of railway or harbour revenue". Railway revenues, however, were to be used during the first four years of the Union only to repair a leak in the revenues. A provision which in no wise excused Mr. Hull from using railways as a regular source of revenue and basing his estimates on railway contributions. He had put down the railways for £500,000 in the coming year, and since the Union first rejoiced us, has bled the railways to the tune of £3,179,000. Mr. Sauer's objections in the railway interest to this sort of finance have us all with him. For the rest, dishonours seem to us divided. It is the old story of the Cape v. the Transvaal, each Minister standing up for his Colony. The Cape desires to continue its excellent, old and tried device of mulcting Witwatersrand by high rates on all imported produce, and rates absurdly low on South African produce, and agricultural implements, etc., made in South Africa. Mr. Sauer naturally was all for this system and the Cape farmer in whose interest it

was begun, and Mr. Hull, as a Transvaaler, just as clearly opposed to Mr. Sauer. He could have beaten Mr. Sauer with the Transvaal element behind him, but some demon whispered to him, "Try death duties"; and with death duties proposed to oust the old succession duties. This cost the Treasurer his Witwatersrand admirers, but pleased the farmers. But one fine day arose a magnate, and pointed out in plain figures to the astonished Dutch landowners just how hardly death duties are capable of weighing on landed estates. The consequent revulsion of feeling was probably the undoing of the Treasurer. When certain persons fall out honest men do not inevitably come by their own. Nor is it expected of them that Unionists should turn Mr. Botha's late misfortunes to account. Yet these should be united in their policy of indulgence so long as the Premier lies abject beneath the feet of his reactionaries.

It is wholesome even in the chill and shadow of his removal to think of another type of South African in Sir Julius Wernher, whose long agony is now over. He was a big man, constructive, no speculator; a born administrator; a gentleman of sound South German stock; just, having taste and love for beautiful things; having a genius for friendship. Ergo Quintilium.

THE CITY.

THE best that can be said of the Stock Exchange this week is that things might easily have been much worse. Heavy liquidation has been in progress in all the recently active sections of the "House". The seat of trouble is the Marconi market. It is now evident that a considerable number of speculators, particularly in Ireland, who bought Marconis at high prices are unable to meet their commitments. This unfortunate termination to the Marconi gamble, coming so soon after the Nigerian Tin slump, is causing great anxiety. Last week's failures, which were traceable to defaults in Cork, have been followed by a Dublin failure equally serious. This naturally is reflected on the London Stock Exchange, and trouble at the approaching fortnightly settlement is regarded as inevitable. It can only be hoped that before account day the worst difficulties will have been overcome, and it may be remarked that when trouble is clearly foreseen, as it now is, there is better chance of salvage arrangements being made.

The losses incurred in Marconis have necessitated liquidation of other securities. Oil shares have become depressed, and many of the optimists who bought Home Railway stocks during the coal strike have been forced to realise. The definite announcement that the Brighton Company is to make an issue of £800,000 of new stock was inopportune from the market viewpoint. The issue is being made to existing shareholders, £250,000 in new Ordinary stock at 110 and £550,000 in second Preference stock at 120, and in such circumstances there are always some shareholders who sell old stock in order to take up the new at the slightly advantageous price of the offer. Traffic returns this week were good on the whole, but had no effect on prices, and then, to crown everything, the threatening aspect of the labour situation in one quarter and another was quite enough to deprive the market of support. Metropolitans were especially weak owing to forced liquidation by speculators who were also interested in the Marconi market.

The sharp reaction that has occurred in Canadian Pacifics is in keeping with the movements in other speculative shares. Traffic returns are quite satisfactory, and investors need not be alarmed by the change in the tone of the market. The decline is due to profit-taking and to realisations by speculators who have losses to meet elsewhere. Similarly Grand Trunks have been heavy. Wall Street is now adjusting itself to the prospect of Mr. Roosevelt's election as President. When the objections to the "third term" have been swallowed it is quite easy to prove that Mr. Roosevelt

is a more desirable President than Mr. Taft from the point of view of the stock markets. Business in Americans remains wholly professional, and for the present quotations are being supported. Foreign railways have attracted but little attention. Mexicans are generally easier, Mexican North-Western being affected by an issue of stock taking precedence of the common. Argentines remain firm.

In the Miscellaneous markets, Marconis have, of course, been the feature. The present quotation compares with $7\frac{1}{2}$ at the last "make-up", which was exactly £1 lower than the preceding making-up price. The seriousness of the slump needs no emphasis; but it is satisfactory to note that a recovery from the lowest levels has been made. Dealers are also very nervous regarding American Marconis. These shares are dealt in for "special settlement", the date of which has not yet been fixed, and a comparison of the present price with that of the day when the shares were introduced to the public shows that heavy losses have been incurred. The public paid between £3 and £4 for the shares without knowing what they were buying or whom they were buying from, and the penalty has soon to be paid.

In the Mining market, the death of Sir Julius Wernher had no appreciable effect upon Kaffirs, because it was well known that his personal interest in the market was very small, and his affairs had been arranged so that his demise should not cause any disturbance. News developments regarding Anglo-Continental Mines has been disappointing. Lord Harris had nothing encouraging to say about the tin lode at the West African Mines meeting, and the report of the Government Inspector of Mines, which was so much talked about in advance, was equally doubtful. Thus the last hopes of the belated "bulls" were negated. Other mining departments have been devoid of interest.

Rubber shares were unable wholly to withstand surrounding influences, but prices have kept relatively firm, because the small buying recently in progress was for investment. Oil descriptions, on the other hand, have suffered severely. The large "bull" account in Ural Caspians was an obviously vulnerable spot, and forced selling, accompanied by profit-taking, has caused a sharp decline. Here again, however, a recovery from the worst prices is a satisfactory sign. The fall in Shells is not unwelcome to those who were awaiting an opportunity to pick up stock again after having taken profits, as the earnings of the company are understood to be highly satisfactory.

Taking a broad view of the financial situation, there is nothing seriously disquieting, but the adjustment of speculative accounts may take some time, and no immediate revival of business is expected.

INSURANCE.

INTERNATIONAL LIFE OFFICE EXPENDITURE.

SEVERAL important life offices regularly report rather disquieting expense ratios, but they nevertheless make constant progress and appear to flourish fairly well, although few of them have so far won a high reputation for the liberality of their bonuses. American and colonial offices have, of course, led the way in this undesirable direction, but the expenditure of certain home institutions is also high, and there seems, unfortunately, to be no immediate prospect of reduction—at all events to any considerable extent. The fact may be regrettable, but policy-holders need be under no alarm, except as respects the amount of the bonuses they will be paid. Because an office spends rather more or rather less than one-fifth of the premiums it receives, it does not at all follow that its administration is bad or even extravagant; there may be no present opportunity to lower the expense ratio. Most persons are aware that the proportion of new to renewal business transacted is considered when actuarial calculations are being made, also that an office disbursing money freely may in reality be conducted with the most scrupulous economy. Under special circumstances a 20 per cent. expense rate may leave

a larger margin of profit than the more attractive rate of only 15 per cent. All this, one may say, is now generally known, but there are other causes which are more or less overlooked by the public.

International life offices, for instance, necessarily incur greater expenditure than do those which make no attempt to go abroad, and the extent of the additional outlay will in each case be governed by the special circumstances—mainly the number and character of the different countries entered and their distance from the home office. Obviously a company which established branches in all parts of the world would be unable to operate its business at as moderate a cost as some rival which merely invaded two countries, say, Egypt and British India, or France and Holland. The Gresham Life Office supplies a true instance of an international life office. Accounts just published show that out of a total premium income of £1,040,489 only £152,532 was received within the United Kingdom and £887,958, or nearly six-sevenths, elsewhere. Not only are the British Isles thoroughly worked, but the ramifications of the business have been extended to almost all European countries, to Egypt, British India, South Africa, Jamaica, Trinidad, and South America; and also, quite recently, to Canada. A comprehensive business of this kind is inevitably expensive, and the Gresham's life expense ratio is found to have been 21.1 per cent. in 1909, 21.68 per cent. in 1910, and 22.8 per cent. in 1911, when, in addition to valuation expenses, the cost of structural alterations, necessitated by the development of the business, was charged against revenue.

Such rates are unquestionably high—apparently excessive, but it must not be overlooked, in the first place, that the company transacts a large new business. Last year it completed 6539 policies for a net amount of £2,171,712, and secured an annual revenue of £104,178, plus all single premiums received. Nearly one-tenth of the total premium income was therefore represented by new premiums, whereas many old and flourishing societies are content with 5 per cent. or even less. This difference partly explains the cause of the greater outlays of the Gresham and similar offices; their managements are essentially progressive—almost to the extent of provoking criticism. However, the main cause of additional expenditure is the widespread distribution of the business, for this leads to head offices and executive staffs being multiplied, and in some countries the rate of commission paid to agents is appreciably higher than it is here.

Colonial and foreign connexions are, as a matter of fact, somewhat expensive luxuries, and they might prove disastrous in the long run were it not for certain compensating advantages that are gained. Among these may specially be mentioned the higher rate of interest that can be earned with safety, and, secondly, a partial escape from the burden of income tax. The Gresham, for instance, realised £4 4s. 1d. per cent. on its funds, after income tax had been deducted, and its accounts further show that only the small sum of £1602 had to be paid to Government in respect of £426,750 received. By investing the bulk of its funds abroad this company appears to have escaped payment of many thousand pounds in the form of income tax, and to this extent its actual expenditure was reduced. It is possible, of course, that certain sums paid to foreign and colonial Governments as duty may have been charged in the accounts as expenses of management, but even if such were the case the full amount so charged would have to be deducted from the expenditure, appreciably reducing the nominal expense ratio.

AN ANGELLIC ILLUSION.

By ARTHUR A. BAUMANN.

A YEAR or two ago Mr. Norman Angell, journalist, or, as Mr. Lawson* calls him, abstract thinker and emotional idealist, made the discovery that modern

* "Modern Wars and War Taxes: a Manual of Military Finance." By W. R. Lawson. London and Edinburgh: Blackwood. 1912. 6s. net.

nations were so financially interdependent that war in future would become impossible, because whichever combatant won, both would be ruined. It was a taking theory; and it was skilfully worked out. Mr. W. R. Lawson, who has written a great many books on international, colonial, national and municipal finance, seems to have been pardonably nettled by the intrusion of a stranger into his own domain. Not that he under-estimates the important part which finance must play in coming international "readjustments" of disputed or disputable spheres. Far from it. "The rattling of the purse may be as freely resorted to by diplomatists as the rattling of the sabre." But he thinks the question of whether international finance makes for peace or war one for expert financiers, and advises abstract thinkers and emotional idealists to leave it alone. In short, this book is written to show that "The Great Illusion" is itself an illusion of Mr. Norman Angell. Modern nations are financially interdependent, certainly; but this co-operation between the banks of different countries reduces the risk of panics, and minimises instead of increasing the difficulty of financing a war. The Bank of England is in close and constant touch with the banks and bourses of Berlin, Vienna, Paris, New York and St. Petersburg. The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street feels the pulse of all her patients—and when they are sick they all come to her—and is thus enabled to take precautionary measures long before the outer world has perceived symptoms of danger. If, for instance, war broke out between Great Britain and Germany, the commercial houses engaged in the exchange of goods between England and Germany would probably be ruined, and banking accounts with Berlin and Vienna would have to be hastily settled—though even that is problematical. But the banking resources of Paris and New York would still be open to us, and everybody knows how powerful they are. In the Boer War the loans issued by Sir Michael Hicks Beach were largely subscribed in New York—another proof of the far-seeing wisdom of Lord Salisbury's persistent friendliness to the United States in the Venezuelan and Cuban affairs. The telegraph, the telephone, and the Marconi message have steadied the Stock Exchange, instead of upsetting it, as Mr. Norman Angell predicted. This is proved by the events of the past year. In the autumn of last year Great Britain was as near to war with Germany as she has ever been, a fact that must have been well known to the Rothschilds, the Barings, and the Governor of the Bank of England. Yet there was not the slightest disturbance on the Stock Exchange. Shortly afterwards, without a word of warning, without any diplomatic preliminaries, war broke out between Italy, a member of the Triple Alliance, and Turkey, the ancient ally and protégé of England. There was hardly a ripple on the surface either of the Stock Exchange or the Continental bourses. Last summer we had the railway strike; this spring we have had the coal strike; the two most serious dangers that have ever threatened our industry. Neither event produced the least effect upon Stock Exchange values, except perhaps a small temporary weakness in the market for Home Railways during the summer. But during the coal strike in the spring something like a boom in industrials and mines and shipping and telegraphs and tramways was merrily proceeding on the Stock Exchange. In the old days any of these events, the coal strike, the Morocco negotiations, the war between Turkey and Italy, might have produced a panic, and would certainly have caused a heavy slump. All this is quite contrary to the Angellic theory: and the explanation is that what causes panic is uncertainty and suspense. The fear of an evil is always worse than the thing itself. One can imagine the panics of old days when the news of one of Clive's battles in India took six months to reach London! The story of the speculators in Omnium stock, who dressed up some confederates in foreign uniforms and brought them from Dover to London in post-chaises with the false news of Bonaparte's defeat in 1814, which

is set forth in Lord Cochrane's trial, reads like an absurd romance. In fact the news of Waterloo was brought to the Rothschilds by a messenger in a small open boat, who landed between Hythe and Sandgate. But electricity has changed all that, and the certainty of knowing what has happened within an hour or so has turned out to be a wonderful nerve-sedative. Besides, there are the indisputable facts of the war between Germany and France in 1870, which knock Mr. Angell's theory on the head.

Mr. Norman Angell's chief argument is that war is so unprofitable to both parties that neither, in these democratic days, will be fool enough to engage in it. But is war unprofitable? British wars may be so: the Crimean War was so: the Boer War was so. But that is because we wage our wars for no clear object or policy, and in the most extravagant manner. We are never prepared for war: and in consequence have to spend twice as much as anybody else. When in a war, we are careful to proclaim that we shall take nothing for ourselves. It is not so that the Germans go to war. The war of 1870 not only cost the Germans nothing, but they made a very handsome profit out of it. The initial cost of the war to Germany, Mr. Lawson tells us, was £77,550,000. But France paid an indemnity of £213,000,000, and ceded the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, which have been valued at £64,000,000. These two sums amount to £199,450,000, which subtracted from £77,550,000 left the Germans with a balance of £200,000,000, all but half a million. It is true that we made nothing out of the Boer War; and that the Japanese made nothing out of their Chinese and Russian Wars. But that was not because modern wars are unprofitable, but because Britons and Japanese are not Germans. With regard to Mr. Angell's other argument that the financial disturbance caused by war is so great as to act as a preventive, the facts are equally against him. Two and a half per cent. Consols at 77 are the equivalent of three per cent. Consols at 92. Our three per cent. Consols went through the Crimean War at an average of 90½; through the Indian Mutiny at 93½; through the American Civil War at 91½; and through the Franco-German War at prices ranging from 93 to 91½. Immediately preceding the Franco-German War there was something of a panic on the Stock Exchange; but it was short-lived and was represented by an average fall of five or six points in foreign securities, such as Italian, Peruvian, Spanish, Egyptian, Turkish and Mexican. As a further contradiction of Mr. Angell's theory it has to be said that a great many people make a great deal of money out of war. Birmingham and Sheffield did a roaring trade during the Boer War, which perhaps explains the Jingo politics of the Midlands. The owners of steam-coal also make huge profits out of war. Nor does the banking interest lose by war. All the fortunes of the Pitt period were made by those whom Cobbett denounced as "loan-mongers" and "tax-eaters". The great houses of Baring and Rothschild were built on the ruins of the Napoleonic wars. So that it will be seen that there are many financial interests which stand to gain by war.

There is but one way of using finance as a weapon to stop war, and that is impossible. If the eight Great Powers of the world were to meet at The Hague and agree to make money contraband of war, the supplying of which to a belligerent would be a breach of neutrality, every nation would then have to finance its own wars out of its domestic resources. That would put an end to war in civilised democracies; but it would give too dangerous an advantage to half-civilised countries, like China and Japan, whose soldiers fight on a few pence per day. To make money contraband of war is therefore a counsel of perfection; but until it is done all talk at Hague Conferences is pure hypocrisy.

Mr. Norman Angell might reply that times have changed since the Franco-German and Boer Wars. They have changed, and it is an open question whether a nation debauched by a Chancellor of the Exchequer who has turned the Treasury into an insurance office, a labour bureau, and a charity

organisation society would be able to support a great war with the calmness and courage which carried Great Britain through its former wars. That is a vast and vitally interesting question, into which Mr. W. R. Lawson enters minutely. His figures and conclusions are disquieting, even startling: his book should be read by every serious man. But the taxable capacity of Great Britain, and the margin of taxation left for the financing of a great war, is too large a subject to open at the close of an article. Mr. Lawson answers Mr. Angell in the following sentence: "Finance never yet prevented an outbreak of war, though it has brought many wars to an abrupt conclusion. The Germans know all the ins and outs of war finance better than anybody else. They have made up their minds what financial risks are worth taking for the sake of the highest prize any nation can aspire to—a ready-made Colonial Empire. Half-a-dozen 'Black Saturdays' in Berlin would not frighten them from their purpose. These are but passing storms that clear the atmosphere. If financial chaos has to come anyhow, a Bourse panic more or less won't signify". It was the bad harvest last summer caused by the drought, far more than the prayers and curses of the Bleichröders and the Mendelssohns, that checked the hand of the German war party.

A MUSICAL WAR.

By JOHN F. RUNCIMAN.

TO speak as the vulgar, someone in Liverpool is going to have a deuce of a time. In London, as is well known, musicians never quarrel. There are no rifts in amateur choral societies; members never secede from professional orchestras; all is peace and love from year's end to year's end. The amateur musicians of Liverpool would find this intolerably tame. Whether on account of the Irish element, or because of the proximity of the town to the Irish coast, a meeting of the members of the Philharmonic Society on 17 May seems to have resembled Donnybrook Fair, where someone or another went about with a stick, and when he saw a head hit it. However, no heads were actually broken; but, said Mr. Caleb Smith, "They have not woke up to it yet, I am afraid", which rather implies that he intends to wake "them" up; so there may yet be some fun. "They" are the Committee of the Society, and it will be instructive and useful to seek out their offence.

There are two causes of dispute. First, the Committee have not (it is alleged) tried to make money and pay off a heavy debt incurred some years ago; second, they have offered programmes which evidently were distasteful to many of the subscribers. As regards the second complaint I am in sympathy with the rebels; the other leaves me cold. If the Philharmonic Society is frankly a money-making concern like our three great orchestras (*our* Philharmonic simply does not count at all), and if it cannot make money by playing good programmes well as those orchestras do, then let the directors face the situation boldly and turn their hall into a picture-palace. At the same time they do not seem to have done badly. Their debt of £8300 (incurred through the necessity of buying a new roof for the hall) is now reduced to £1500; and this year, a bad one, they have lowered it by another £350, after paying all expenses. Still more is promised. According to the report of the "Liverpool Courier" now lying before me, during the past year £190 was spent on keeping the hall in good order and some miscellaneous expenses, and this "would not occur again". So the hall is to take care of itself in future—until it tumbles about the Society's ears, I suppose, or until the town authorities interfere. At all events the complaints about finance seem unfounded.

On the artistic side the Committee have gone wilfully or carelessly or blindly wrong. No words are too strong to condemn the outrageous folly of such a programme as that Mr. Landon Ronald had to conduct: Elgar's violin concerto and his first symphony in one

evening are almost unthinkable, and it is not surprising that the hall was nearly half-empty before the end. Apparently the Committee are quite content with themselves in this respect, and a return to an even worse state of matters is hinted at. There is talk of cutting down the cost of hiring or buying new music. That would mean a revival of the old stereotyped programme with novelties rigorously barred—the kind of programme our Philharmonic persisted in giving us in the bad bygone days. The Committee could not do better than copy the programmes of the London Symphony or the New Symphony Orchestra. I do not agree with the grumbling about "The Veil". It is a poor, insignificant setting of a lot of twaddle; yet Cowen is nowadays a serious musician, and it is only fair—to him and to Liverpoolians—that his work should have a hearing. The Committee have made far bigger mistakes than in giving that. They have allowed themselves to be overruled by their conductors and to give concerts which, though containing excellent numbers, were ill-arranged, indigestible lumps made up of incongruous elements. If this continues the membership will drop, and the Philharmonic will find itself bankrupt.

At the meeting, after Dr. Richard Caton, the chairman, had explained matters, the game began. Mr. Thomas John said too much money was paid to solo instrumentalists and the band, and, considering that their Society was a very poor copy of the London Philharmonic, they should not pay more than the latter body. Let me point out to Mr. John that their Society cannot possibly be a "poor copy" if it does the work it is reported to have done; the London Philharmonic has long ceased to count in London musical life. Anyhow, famous solo players are willing to play much cheaper in London than in Liverpool. Rightly or wrongly, they reckon a London success as more useful to them than a Liverpool success: in fact, they do not value a Liverpool success at a pin's fee and only play there for the cash. As for the cost of the band, I should like to know how many concerts were given for £3046; because the £2500 paid in London would be for only six or seven concerts. Mr. John, posing as a reformer, pleaded for a reactionary policy and spoke with some heat of the "modern abortions called music". If I used such language about our Academies and their mighty works this office would be littered with writs in an hour; but the meeting laughed goodnaturedly and passed on to electing its Committee. Here there was some hard fighting, but the disputes are purely parochial. In the result the Society determined to hold to its old path.

That will be fatal. Other orchestras will arise and eclipse the Philharmonic as effectually as the Queen's Hall Orchestra eclipsed our Philharmonic. People will not stand old-fashioned stodginess nowadays. After reading reports, circulars and what not carefully, it appears to me that the agitators are justified in demanding (1) more artistic programmes; (2) the singing of as many songs as possible in English; (3) in all possible cases the preference of English over foreign artists; (4) the abolition of the analytical programme. This has become a nuisance. It began as a direct bribe to certain critics of the last generation; it ensured their hearty co-operation; and in these times when every critic is above suspicion it is no longer needed. Those who can understand the notes and musical quotations don't want it; and it is useless to those who do not understand. Beyond these suggestions it is impossible for one who is not intimate with Liverpool affairs to say more. Someone remarked at the meeting that as a thousand conductors are starving in Germany a few could be had for nothing; but I assure Mr. Caleb Smith that, apart from the wickedness of making starving musicians work without pay, the state of affairs he imagines to exist in Germany does not exist. The poorest German conductor would not come here save to gain money; he would prove himself a fool if he did. If a Liverpool tradesman in a bad season could not sell his goods, would he take kindly the suggestion that his duty was to give them away? If the tradesman's capital is sunk in his goods, so is a musician's.

capital sunk in the knowledge and skill it has taken him years to acquire; and the one is as much entitled as the other to get a livelihood out of his sunken capital. I do not suppose these remarks will influence Mr. Caleb Smith any more than my previous ones will influence the old gang. But unless they all take thought and mend their ways some other body of instrumentalists will rise up and take their place. This great Liverpool war has a lesson for every orchestral and choral body in the kingdom.

With the exception of Massenet's "Don Quichotte", nothing striking has been done at the London Opera House. And Massenet's work is not, after all, very striking. I shall have something to say about it soon; but to-day I want to refer to a much more ambitious work, "The Children of Don", by Lord Howard de Walden and Mr. J. Holbrooke. This is based on a Welsh legend, and, frankly, I hardly understand it. I know nothing about Welsh things save its national beast, which out-Manxes the Manx cat in possessing neither head nor tail nor legs; and the spirit of its legendary lore is far beyond me. Perhaps in time I shall grasp it. For the present, after closely examining the pianoforte-score, I can at any rate see that there are some effective situations, and for these Mr. Holbrooke has invented some of the best music he has yet written. How far it is genuine theatre-music is another matter, but in this respect I like it better than "Dylan". The score, even the piano-score, is immensely complicated, though not recklessly or wilfully complicated, and it is hard to guess at many of the orchestral effects; but it is picturesque and full of colour. The work is to be given at the Opera House on 7 June, and I feel it my duty to write a few lines beforehand. We English are perpetually asking for English operas; and the danger is that when we get one the production may pass more or less unnoticed. In this case Mr. Holbrooke is one of our younger and more daring composers, and it will be a scandal if it is left to be judged by a few critics in a papered house. The public is wanted. Lord Howard de Walden has a right to say "We have taken infinite pains to produce you an opera; we have mounted it and rehearsed it with infinite pains. At least, come to hear what it is like".

A DISCOURSE OF "THE DOUBLE GAME"—II.

By JOHN PALMER.

ROBERT BROWNING not only in the conception and execution of his "Ring and the Book" illustrates the artist's progress in creation through the three stages of which I wrote last week; he actually describes it for us with an accuracy rare in a poet's critical account of himself. The poet is seldom able to write intelligibly of his work. Poetic creation, in the words of a poet, is a prerogative of "that imperial faculty whose throne is contained within the invisible nature of man"; and the singer is himself most often baffled by the song that rises to his lips. Robert Browning himself would be hard pressed to tell exactly why and how he was gifted to utter his lyric of the wise thrush at the bent spray's edge. But Browning has lifted the veil, so far as it may be lifted, in allowing us to take him in the act of beating out the perfect gold of a masterpiece.

"Do you see this square old yellow Book, I toss
I' the air, and catch again, and twirl about
By the crumpled vellum covers,—pure crude fact
Secreted from man's life when hearts beat hard,
And brains, high-blooded, ticked two centuries
since?"

Here was exactly that piece of life which Browning alone of all who yet had encountered it could see imaginatively. Here was pure crude fact—truth as the historian views it. Yet here had it lain neglected for near two hundred years—its precise value to anyone but Robert Browning being "eightpence English just". Who has not heard the fool who tells us that

facts speak for themselves? Let us have Browning's view:

"This is the bookful; thus far take the truth,
The untampered gold; the fact untampered with,
The mere ring-metal ere the ring be made!
And what has hitherto come of it? Who preserves
The memory of this Guido, and his wife
Pompilia, more than Ademollo's name,
The etcher of those prints, two crazie each,
Saved by a stone from snowing broad the Square
With scenic backgrounds?"

Before even the poet could spell the value of his trove, he must already have given richly of himself in the mysterious process of imaginative creation. The three stages of the poet's progress which for the sake of analytic clearness I have divided off and separately discussed are frequently almost simultaneous. The poet's imagination will often spring at some piece of life, seeing it at a glance in the final perfect form. But between this sanguine leap of the spirit and the methodical progress from just observation to the perfect piece of art there are degrees of swiftness which make it possible, as in this case of Robert Browning, to follow the poet's motion. Moreover, Browning himself, taking his Book to Rome, trying "truth's power on likely people", and finding himself confronted with the sort of foolish questions (as to whether he dealt in poetry and make-believe, or told truth from the book) which modern critics would certainly ask if a poet turned up in London to-morrow on a similar errand—Browning himself, in the humble sincerity of greatness, looked steadily within his heart and answered as truthfully as he could:

"Yes and no!

From the book, yes; thence bit by bit I dug
The lingot truth, that memorable day,
Assayed and knew my piecemeal gain was gold,—
Yes; but from something else surpassing that,
Something of mine which, mixed up with the mass,
Made it bear hammer and be firm to file.
Fancy with fact is just one fact the more;

I fused my live soul and that inert stuff,
Before attempting smithcraft, on the night
After the day when,—truth thus grasped and
gained,—
The book was shut and done with and laid by."

The book was shut and done with—the just view of this piece of life was attained. Thereafter we follow Browning as turning to free himself and find the world he stepped out upon the narrow terrace of his home in Florence, and felt his way in spirit to Arezzo, Castelnuovo, Rome. It was then that the poet's miracle—the miracle of Elisha with the corpse ('tis a credible feat with the right man and way)—was wrought upon dead truth—

"that little, left

By the roadside 'mid the ordure, shards, and weeds,
Until I haply, wandering that way,
Kicked it up, turned it over, and recognised,
For all the crumblement, this abacus,
This square old yellow book."

We cannot linger here upon the vision of this dead truth so wrought upon. Let Browning put the question; and then we will leave him with the perfect gold.

"Well, now; there's nothing in nor out o' the world
Good except truth: yet this, the something else,
What's this then, which proves good yet seems
untrue?"

That I mixed with truth, motions of mine
That quickened, made the inertness malleable
O' the gold was not mine,—what's your name for
this?"

We can only answer with blind words that our name for this is poet's truth, which—in whatever habit it issues to the world (to be loaded with this or that vile term of the critic or professor)—lives more by virtue of those

motions of his that quickened, than by quality of the gold that was not his.

I am now ready for Mr. Maurice Baring's "The Double Game"; but unfortunately I have almost entirely forgotten what I wanted to say about it. We have seen that, when Robert Browning went to Rome, and "tried truth's power on likely people", he found that they had forgotten all about Guido and Pompilia:

"Yet a little while,

The passage of a century or so,
Decads thrice five, and here's time paid his tax,
Oblivion gone home with her harvesting,
And left all smooth again as scythe could shave."

The reason why the people of Rome forgot all about Pompilia in a century or so is precisely the reason why in a fortnight or so I have forgotten all about "The Double Game". Pure crude fact is the harvest of oblivion. Critics have found virtue in "The Double Game" for its fidelity to the facts of modern life in Russia. But alas! not one fact or figure of Mr. Baring's piece of life has suffered the necessary miracle. "The Double Game" is faithfully observed, perhaps—I neither know nor care; for I do not go to the theatre to learn about Russia. Certainly it is well wrought—an honest piece of craftsmanship; and there is obviously a difference between "The Double Game" and "Bella Donna". Unfortunately it is not that vital difference which distinguishes art from its counterfeit. Mr. Baring tells the truth about Russia. Mr. Hichens does not tell the truth about Egypt. The distinction is not altogether unimportant; but it is not a distinction in which a dramatic critic is necessarily interested or concerned.

AN INDEPENDENT.

By FILSON YOUNG.

AS the law stands it is extremely difficult to make any honest comment on the career and character of a contemporary without running the risk of being called upon to produce elaborate justification for anything which the subject of your remarks may deem unflattering. There are some men, however, whose work and influence are so bound up with their character and personality that the work cannot be separated from the man; and although there are few positions which I would more unwillingly occupy than that of defendant in a libel action brought by Mr. Bottomley, his influence in public life is interesting enough and important enough to be worthy of serious criticism, and the risk must be regarded as worth taking.

It is always profoundly interesting to see a man of great ability attempting to stand alone, to carry out his ideas not through the aid of established machinery and institutions—in which they inevitably go through a process of adulteration and dilution—but simply through his own untrammelled activities. There are many men in public life who call themselves independent; but I hardly know of one, with any influence worth mentioning, who is so really, except Mr. Bottomley. Many clever men start life with the idea of only saying what they think, and only working for what they individually believe to be desirable, and of doing their work with their own hands alone; but gradually they become attached to institutions and parties, and absorbed by them, finding indeed that unless they do so all parties and institutions will be in opposition to them. The mere process of living attaches them to life; and every tie that a man forms, every responsibility he takes, every hostage he gives to fortune is an influence that gradually tends to muffle and paralyse the direct and free expression of his solitary, individual mind. Here and there a strong man like Cecil Rhodes creates institutions and parties to carry out his ideals; but far oftener, when the man is not fortunate enough or unscrupulous enough to acquire the necessary material power, or not clever enough to use it when he has acquired it, his isolation of mind becomes a mere weakness; and he finds himself, as John

Davidson found himself, so cut off and isolated from the world about him that he has no means of communication with it, that it does not understand or even hear him; and he finds the world a place impossible for him to live in. What is interesting about Mr. Bottomley is that he has so far created no great machinery to carry out his ideas, that he works quite single-handed, not with, but practically against existing institutions, and yet that he is strong enough to support that isolation and, in spite of it, to make the world listen to him.

It is at least one sign of greatness that a man does not fit into existing institutions. But it is a disadvantage, in this way: he has no powerful and organised army of friends ready to support him at critical moments and, if he be unscrupulous, to give his unscrupulousness some high-sounding and respectable name. Therefore most of our modern Samsons wisely get hold of a pillar supporting some human institution, so that if they fall they drag it down with them. In that case it is to the interest of their fellow-men to prevent them from falling; while in the case of the isolated Samson no one is involved in his downfall, and everyone is against him. In this aspect of things the Samson becomes to the eye of the interested onlooker a mere David, who arrays himself single-handed against the Goliaths of associated human strength. I confess that when I see a fight of this kind going on I am instinctively always on the side of the weaker, irrespective of the merits of the case. And when I see Mr. Bottomley engaged single-handed in one of his periodical conflicts with some of the most powerful organisations of our world I cannot help wanting him to win, whether he is right or wrong. I do not profess to be a judge of right and wrong for other people; but I am a deeply interested spectator of any fight that may be going on; and the only kind of conscience I have in the matter is a desire, that the side against which the odds are heavy should win.

I know nothing about Mr. Bottomley's history as a financier, but I do not understand that it differs greatly from that of most people who have been successful in what is called the Money Market. The money that you get in the world of speculation must, it seems to me, come out of somebody else's pocket. It is always the widow and orphan who are supposed to supply the vast sums which the successful financier accumulates; but if that be so, widows and orphans must be much richer people, and even more credulous and greedily desirous of adding to their wealth, than they are generally supposed to be. But I cannot see that there are many fine shades in the morality of the matter. The sum of money that any human being can really honestly earn in his lifetime is very small; and great fortunes, when they are not inherited or given, are in my opinion almost all dishonestly come by. As far as I can gather Mr. Bottomley has made a fortune and lost it again; so that it has either gone back to the widows and orphans, in which case everyone should be satisfied, or else it has passed into the hands of other money gatherers or of the professions which are parasites upon them. Money is not lost; it only changes hands.

I am more interested, however, in Mr. Bottomley's method of using his influence than in the way he has acquired it. Whatever may be thought of him—and I have heard people whose opinion I respect say that they think very ill of him—it is impossible to deny that, quite single-handed, he is making his influence felt on his time. It is a really remarkable fact that a man who has always had a large hostile public ready and willing to trip him up on the slightest opportunity should have been able to hold his own, not by keeping quiet and hushing things up, but by coming out into the open and fighting. In court after court of law, with the best counsel arrayed against him, and with the whole established order of things opposed to him, he has come out a virtual winner; in fact he seems to have spent almost the whole of his life walking with comparative security between red-hot ploughshares. He has won and held with the greatest ease the right to represent in Parliament an important London constituency—and this, to put it mildly, with no very great support or approval

from the managers of his own political party. He has flouted the Government and made them appear ridiculous. And I cannot doubt that he has more talent than almost any of the safe, approved, respectable men who are at present prominent in the public eye.

These are very real and formidable facts. It is of no use to pretend they are otherwise, and not nearly so interesting as to look them in the face and see what they really mean. It is of no use for gentle and refined people to hold up their hands and say that Mr. Bottomley is a vulgar and blatant creature who robs widows and orphans, and edits an odious paper called "John Bull". That is not a complete account of him, and does not explain him away. I have no love for the kind of journalism represented by "John Bull", but successful journalism is nowadays not a pretty trade, nor do a refined taste, love of truth, or fear of exaggeration constitute a safe passport to eminence in it. I do not know that Mr. Bottomley cares twopence about good taste; I do know that he constantly outrages it. The contents-bills of "John Bull" often seem to me offensive and even indecent, and it would be impossible to defend the appalling Philistinism that plastered the trees and bushes about Byfleet with its advertisements. These are brutal examples of methods which have for their object something very different from the inculcation of a refined æsthetic taste. But then Mr. Bottomley does not pretend to care about that; it is not the work which he has set himself. What he does desire—quite sincerely, I believe—is to apply to the government of the country the methods of common-sense which men apply to the administration of their own business. He desires to tear down the veils of convention and pretence with which the governing machinery has become shrouded; to throw half of it upon the scrap-heap as quite obsolete and unfitted for the duties it has to perform, and to simplify, clean, and oil the rest, so that the work will be done more cheaply, more honestly, and more efficiently. His attitude is that of a small but clear-headed shareholder in a great company suffering from over-capitalisation, an effete administration, a board of directors playing more for their own hands than for the good of the shareholders, and equipped with old-fashioned and obsolete machinery. The company being the country, Parliament its board of directors, the Cabinet its administration, Mr. Bottomley has by joining the board sought to do what he can there; but he has found, as so many other men have found, that to stand in a minority of one is not a very easy way of getting his reforms carried out. So he has started his own machine in the form of a newspaper which, whatever may be thought of its taste, is undoubtedly conducted with great journalistic ability. He has started his "John Bull League"—a machinery which, since it is not meant to support and encourage any existing institution, receives scant notice from the Press of the country, and which for all that contains the nucleus of a very real power. And with these aids he has made, and is making, his mark on public life.

And now will come the great test. Character still stands for much with the English people; and they will not suffer themselves to be led by a man whose character they hold, rightly or wrongly, in suspicion. If a dishonourable man acquires great influence, it is never because of his dishonour, it is because the public believe him to be honourable. And the ablest and most honourable man in the world will lose his influence if the public gets it into its head that he is a bad character. Now the importance of character is this: that it in some measure protects a man against the enemies which every strong and sincere person cannot help making. The lives of very few people are entirely blameless; and if a man's character be suspect, things may be brought against him with deadly effect which, although they might be true, would not be worth while for anyone to rake up against a man of whom the world thought well. Those who believe as I do that Mr. Bottomley's great abilities and often sound ideas might be of benefit to the public life of this country will wish most heartily that he may clear himself of the rather sordid coils in

which his feet have been entangled in the past. Brains and strength are things that we have great need of, and they can hardly be more hopelessly wasted than in winning technical victories in the world of the Law Courts.

THE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER SHOW.

How vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, the bays,
And their incessant labours see
Crowned from some single herb or tree.

WHEN Marvell wrote flower shows were not and the idea of winning palms in the shape of cups or medals by means of the very garden he was vaunting had not yet dawned. And many a garden lover must have wished that such an idea had continued in the limbo of unconsciousness, that his garden could have remained the home of quiet, free from the fury and fret of competition and the exactions which the struggle for awards brings in its train. But the itch for contest is in all of us, and against his better nature man after man gets drawn into exhibiting; then begin long before the show new anxieties about the weather, the fixed date is on his mind, one week he is wondering how he can hurry his flowers on, then comes the sun, and he fears they will be too far advanced, and some scheme for coolness and shade must be devised. At last he wrecks his garden to take to the show every possible flower of merit, spends impossible hours of the night or early morning in a state of wicked temper setting up his exhibit, and then, whatever prizes come his way, loses the enjoyment of his flowers, which soon collapse under the withering climate of a show tent. Showing is an intolerable vanity, he declares, and makes careful notes of the weak spots he intends to rectify before another season.

However, flower shows of the competitive kind continue to exist as meeting some requirement of human nature, and their worst enemy must admit that they do lead to the improvement of flowers and the better embellishment of gardens at large. Competitive showing of particular flowers is still largely in the hands of the true amateur who does the work himself, but the greater display is naturally made by the men who can command an extensive gardening staff, and this sort of amateur varies from the real enthusiast who would equally toil over a few square yards of Suburbia but can raise the realisation of his desires to a higher power, to the merely rich man whose garden is but a form of social competition, directed by a megalomaniac professional brooking no interference with his designs. More and more, however, the amateur is ceasing to become a leading factor in flower shows, nowadays the trade takes charge of such all-important opportunities of advertisement and sale. The big shows could not go on unless the great firms of nurserymen and seedsmen subsidised them freely, and the ever-present danger is that awards tend to be made not on the quality of the exhibit, but according to the standing of the firm or in consideration of the expense to which they have been put.

Meantime the public get a delightful entertainment, and we can safely say that nothing of the kind more charming has ever been provided than the International Show which opened on Wednesday in the grounds of Chelsea Hospital. The private garden has become a peculiarly English institution, like the comfortable house, the fruit of our numerous middle-class possessed of modest wealth and leisure. Italy and France preceded us with the great formal garden that is the appanage of the nobleman's house, but their middle classes live in towns and not even in suburbs; moreover, the French Revolution swept away many a private garden and amateur of flowers. In Holland and Germany we find magnificent trade gardening and fine public gardens, but the people buy cut flowers and do not grow them; still more so is that the case in America, where the conditions of social development and the extremes which mark the climate are all against the private garden. But, on the whole, the English flower show has lagged behind the English garden, not

in numbers by any means but in style. If we compare our Temple shows with the great exhibitions at Paris or Ghent, we should find at the former more variety and more and better individual flowers, but the general effect is distinctly inferior. There are usually in England too many exhibitors to be satisfied, and each exhibitor tries to cram something different into every square foot of space, until the stages are little better than animated catalogues. Partly the crowds account for this disposition; when people have to move in serried ranks along narrow gangways they can only see things in detail; moreover the exhibitor is selling his wares, and tries to set out everything that may attract a purchaser. But at the current exhibition in Chelsea there is ample space, and many of the growers have responded to the opportunity by simplifying their exhibits and aiming at a broad colour effect, in certain cases also utilising with skill any architectural features such as pillars which occur in the space at command. Noteworthy examples of good taste, altogether independent of the superb quality of the flowers, are the rhododendrons near the north end of the great tent, where the colours have been massed, and the group given an undulating billowy effect such as a rhododendron glade takes in the open. Again, for exquisite colour we remember a group of Oriental poppies of amethystine and chocolate shades, set off by the foliage of copper beech and great grey thistles. The most prominent fault in arrangement is the tendency to put in too much and to obtain a stodgy plumcake or pincushion sort of effect, like the summer bedding of a generation ago. The colour sense goes astray; sometimes for want of courage, as in one of the great groups of amaryllis, where the white, light red, and deep cinnamon flowers are all intermingled to their general ineffectiveness; sometimes through sheer insensibility, as in one of the finest exhibits of sweet peas. There the delicate half-shades of pink and lavender all keep together perfectly, but are hopelessly killed by being flanked at one end by the fierce orange of some veldt daisies and at the other by the still cruder oranges and yellows of some African marigolds. The Dutch section shows what can be accomplished by reticence and simplicity; it was to have been all tulips, but the season intervened and a new scheme was then carried out almost wholly in white and purple lilac, leading to an unexpectedly charming group of vegetables only, as though one should go through the drawing-room to the spotless Dutch kitchen.

But if there are casual flaws in the exhibits, as a whole the aspect of the great canvas-covered garden—for one cannot call a space of three and a half acres a tent—is simple and beautiful, and as one enters at the Embankment gate it is hard to repress an exclamation of pure childlike delight at the prettiness of the scene—a stage fairyland that the scent tells you to be real and not painted. The dominant note is struck by the roses, and most of all by those new climbers, the Wichuriana hybrids, with which our gardens have been enriched within the last ten years or so. They have turned out to be extraordinarily amenable to forcing in comparatively small pots, and, as they will bloom in cascades of pink and white all along a six-foot spray, they lend themselves easily to decoration. There are more, perhaps, of these climbers—Hiawatha, Lady Gay, Tausendschoen, American Pillar—and of their pretty baby cousins, than of the show roses proper; but those who want to see a rose and not a bush can surely ask for nothing finer than the extraordinary blooms of Mrs. John Laing, Ulrich Brunner, and Frau Karl, brought by Messrs. Mount.

Perhaps the greatest centre of attraction is the orchid tent, but there wealth is frankly predominant, and the exhibits can be and indeed are appraised in terms of cash. There seems hardly any arrangement beyond the determination to cram as much value as possible into the space available. But as soon as one's feeling of amazement at the structure of the orchids—their almost perverse ingenuity of form and texture and colour—has passed away they leave behind little feeling of beauty. Certainly the *Odontoglossums* are exquisite, but the

popular *Cattleyas* and *Lelias* have a sort of Hebraic opulence and overdressedness, and many of the others are best described by the old servant as "almost as good as if they was artificial." Talk about theories of mimicry—in the dim forests of South America and Burmah there grew up this race of perfect representatives of luxury, of the froth of an over-ripe civilisation! There is one pale green and black orchid that is the very symbol of the adventuress of melodrama, of expensive vice as it is romantically adumbrated in the vision of the shopgirl. It is good to leave these waxen glories and take a turn in the open air to where the rock gardens speak of the mountains, though in one of the tents also you may fall across an exhibit of *Trollius* and *Anemone sulphurea*, a natural harmony of greys and golds, equally recalling cool northern streams and upland pastures. On our way to the rock gardens we happened upon a quiet building labelled Science, where one might learn something of the thought that is being given in patience and obscurity to the guidance of this triumphal commerce of plant raising. A set of *Tropeolums* from the John Innes Institution and of Chinese *Primulas* from the Reading College illustrate by actual examples Mendel's generalisations, which are rendering plant breeding an exact science instead of a gamble; and Rothamsted shows some of the mysteries of plant nutrition, not as yet wholly explicable, but which are being turned to practical advantage by the gardener. But long before he has seen all these things the visitor will have become utterly exhausted; then if he has friends at court let him forgather with the exhibitors and hear of the toils that have gone to the preparation of some of the displays, of the havoc wrought in the plans by a season three weeks ahead of the normal, of the contests between firms and individuals who set out months ago to buy up for their own stands whatever the Continent possessed of superlative merit. And before he leaves, let him not fail to recognise the truly national setting of this great show, Wren's tranquil building of Chelsea Hospital and the spacious terrace where the scarlet-tunicked pensioners take the sun in peace.

MR. MASEFIELD'S POEMS.*

By J. E. BARTON.

WHATEVER on calm consideration may be thought of Mr. John Masefield's recent poems, it is certain that they have not merely tickled the palate of journalists and mild amateurs in verse. They have impressed and excited, at least for the time being, the minds of people who set store by poetry, and who look to poetry for interpretation and revelation of life. No doubt Mr. Masefield, like all contemporary professional authors of any vogue, has a coterie and an opposition. On one side we hear that the poems are "great", even "superb"; on the other, that they outrage the principle of poetry by their matter, and debase its coinage by a deliberate crudity of expression. Freshness of a kind, apparently, is admitted by everybody. The question is whether this freshness is a true, spontaneous force, enlarging the bounds of poetry; or a novel rhetorical brutality which only transgresses them.

It is common sense to recognise, at the outset, that verse which is not poetry is not necessarily bad. A civilised age, especially an age of prose, may develop certain legitimate if secondary functions of verse in addition to what we should all like to think is its original and proper function—the expression of ecstasy. Verse like "The Everlasting Mercy" and "The Widow in the Bye Street" can be appreciated in many ways quite lawfully, while we postpone the ultimate question, "Is this high poetry?" As pieces of fiction, dramatic studies, realistic verse narrative—call them by any safe and provisional title that occurs to you—both

* "The Everlasting Mercy", "The Widow in the Bye Street". "Biography". ("English Review", October 1911, February and May 1912)

works have power and picturesqueness, searching command of detail, and a rapid, engrossing movement. "The Everlasting Mercy" is doubly ambitious, for it attempts a most difficult subject in the autobiographical form; a form always exacting, but here peculiarly so, since the supposed confession sets out to exhibit, through the speech and imagery of a converted rustic blackguard, the susceptibility of a poet. That Saul Kane is by temperament a poet, almost an aesthete, is never in doubt; and a poet he remains to the end. Perhaps this is why his permanent conversion to the ploughshare hardly convinces. Undoubtedly moral conversion both sudden and stable has happened to ruffians quite as ruffianly as Saul; but they have been men of hard native fibre, not creatures of introspective subtlety. Saul has intense vitality, and we are meant to perceive that this flamelike force in the man is capable of a lifelong consecration. The idea is fine, but it fails of conclusiveness in the working out, just because Mr. Masfield (intentionally or no) has made us feel all through the poem that Saul is a potential artist, rather than a potential saint. For the artist soul, conversion is not so much a decisive epoch as an experience often repeated; salutary, let us hope, but seldom attended by profound readjustment of character. The illumination itself—the new vision of heaven and earth—is vividly and truly suggested. I do not blame Mr. Masfield for the fundamental flaw. On the contrary, his choice of hero is highly significant and very germane to his essential flavour as a poet. Incidentally the history of Saul is full of achievement. The prize fight and the carousal scene show a terse and trenchant vigour that no judge of literature can put by; and the long apostrophe of Mother Jaggard has a bald directness of writing which argues, to say the least, great technical skill. The simplicity and "forthright" quality of the style, if studied, are studied extraordinarily well.

Constructively, "The Widow" is a better piece. Its unity is complete, for Mr. Masfield has set himself no insuperable problem in the obvious conclusion. We are in a world of unbroken tragic irony, long familiar to modern fiction. Maupassant or Mr. Hardy, each in his own way, might have handled the tale. Nothing is spared, and the mastery of detail and dialogue rivets attention irresistibly. Indeed, the story and the character are so actual in every part that the pathos of the mother, on which presumably the dramatic interest is meant to be concentrated, is not so central as it should be. On the other hand, her pathos is at times so realistic that the question obtrudes whether in fiction, let alone poetry, such things are tolerable. When the son has been hanged, the dazed mother totters home and recalls his infancy:

"Oh how his little face come, with bright hair,
Dear little face. We made this room so snug;
He sit beside me in his little chair,
I give him real tea sometimes in his mug.
He liked the velvet in the patchwork rug.
He used to stroke it, did my pretty son,
He called it Bunny, little Jimmy done."

The touch is brilliant, but our instinct exclaims "Ne coram populo". Precisely how far a tragic conception may go, in piling on the agony, it is impossible to say. But I take it as a sound critical maxim that such conception must carry with it, at every step, some touch of sublimity. Our pity and terror must always be tempered by a sense of the heroic. Mr. Masfield's prose drama, "Nan", is equally ruthless in detail and issue, but he interfuses them with more of romantic elevation. The soul of the goaded girl is above her fate, and a background of imaginative symbolism—Gaffer Pearce's talk, the summoning horn, the Severn tide—is felt more or less throughout the play. These elements have no counterpart in "The Widow". The tone of the tragedy therefore, though unsparing, is also in a sense pedestrian. It is relieved only by a true sensuousness of natural description and by reflective turns of a sinister beauty:

"The white hands bring the poison and the cord;
Death has a lodge in lips as red as cherries,
Death has a mansion in the yew tree berries."

"Biography", the latest poem, is a long experiment in this reflective mood. The topic of meditation is the contrast of life as a man feels it—a succession of thrilling experiences that make him what he is—and life devitalised in the printed record.

"When I am dust, my penman may not know
Those water-trampling ships which made me glow."

There are striking passages, and lines of aphorism which borrow a pensive power from their setting:

"A soul entirely known is life achieved."

and

"The days that make us happy make us wise".

As a whole, in spite of a main idea that is unhackneyed and worthy of inspired poetry, the piece is amorphous and diffuse. It is doubtful if Mr. Masfield will ever really find himself in the explicitly philosophic type of verse. He will be well advised, I fancy, to anchor himself to the concrete.

In assessing the actual poetic value of these works, small account need be taken of points which seem to have scandalised their more adverse critics. It is true that "bastard" and "lasted" are bad rhyme, and by no means the worst of which Mr. Masfield is capable; that his syntax, punctuation and vocabulary defy the purist; that he reconciles with emotional verse the crude expletive of the navy, and carries fidelity of record to the point of

"Come and see Jimmy have his belly bunted".

These, however, are matters of a sort which it is always idle to discuss, apart from some clear axiom of poetic art. If the verse be readable, sheer solecisms trouble us no more and no less than we mind the wart on a friend's nose. Brutality of diction cuts deeper; but to condemn offhand some particular phrase or line, as an offence to poetry, is always rash. Nothing is an offence to a work of art—I am not for the moment considering public morals or the domestic circle—save what is out of key. It is odd that critics, who presumably have heard of "tone" in painting, should ignore the same principle when they deal with literature. The dialogue of Browning's "Spanish Cloister", like the rhymes of his "Grammarians' Funeral", would be manifestly atrocious or absurd for Tennyson. In point of fact Mr. Masfield's style is singularly at one with itself. And whatever his claims as poet, he has broken ground for literature by taking up fresh materials (hitherto jetsam and plebeian stuff) which he "carries off" as dissolved ingredients of an imaginative scheme. The question whether he has achieved high poetry is therefore no question of detail, but concerns his verse as a whole. Are these poems really transfused with great emotion? Or are they, in the main, rhetorical tours de force?

The test is exacting, but not unfair. Mr. Masfield invites it; for he has deliberately chosen the poetic form, and in this form he has set out to express no butterfly invention, but the play of life and death, of spiritual illuminations and agonies. Clear vision, resulting in force of style, can turn these things into strong narrative, can produce even verse of arresting quality. To turn them into absolute poetry nothing will suffice, apart from what we call "inspiration". Mr. Masfield has abundance of poetic feeling, but poetic feeling is not enough. Themes of this order call for tremendous sincerity, for rapture in the literal sense of the word. The writer must really be carried away, so that our sense of his technical cleverness is wholly merged in the depth of moral passion which he evokes. Nobody, of course, demands that such passion in a long poem (a poem, moreover, of narrative) should everywhere find equal expression. But certainly it

should transfigure the whole texture; and above all we may reasonably look for culminating moments, where the current of thought is gathered up into some line or verse of transcendent feeling. Mr. Masfield's poems do not rise to this criterion. For all their rapidity, they lack the steady glow which, in a great poem, welds verse to verse; and as for his religious verses—to speak particularly of "The Everlasting Mercy", where the highest comparison is challenged—there is nothing that will not instantly fade, more or less, if you set beside it an appropriate fragment of Southwell or Crashaw, Blake or Browning. I have already hinted that Saul Kane somewhat fails to convince at the very point where conviction should be intense. His ecstasy, or what is meant to be his ecstasy, is not without lyric merit; but the strain is thin and fluty by contrast (say) with Smart's organ-tone of praise:

"Glorious hosannah from the den,
Glorious the catholic amen,
Glorious the martyrs' gore."

It is here, in the crucial passages where most naturally we demand the note of great poetry, that Mr. Masfield leaves us fatally conscious of his rhetorical talent. His most emphatic stanzas, while they compel admiration of the vigorous writing, reveal a certain intellectual inadequacy, a want of poetic seriousness.

All this, however, only implies that Mr. Masfield's designs in verse have outrun his vocation. That he is a sincere poet, within his true range, there is little doubt. In his rural atmosphere and in figures like Saul and Jimmy (as in several of the persons, notably Dick Gurvil, of "Nan") he has caught a fresh flavour—a sort of vernal suggestiveness—that is creative and quite his own. To the ear of a West-countryman, particularly, Mr. Masfield's verse has something indigenous. It is not easy to describe a new sensation in art, but I think that many will capture, between the lines of these poems, a smell of earth, a quality of coolness and greenness, perhaps a hint of apple-blossom in the early morning. The sensuousness of his young rustics, their susceptibility and heart-aches and keen physical life, has something in common with the spirit of Mr. A. E. Housman's "Shropshire Lad". The romance of a Western country town, with its cattle market, dreaming elms, and Gothic tower seen across flat meadows, is ingrained in Mr. Masfield; and he has fine intuition of the human passions, often primitive and naïvely expressed, that move against such a background. His own loose style, at its best, reflects the mixture of Kelt and Saxon which belongs to that region. In this neo-pagan, æsthetic-rustic vein he is capable of pure and moving poetry. Some of his digressions, in the present poems, are charmingly imaginative; Saul's tale to the child, for instance, and the fancy about the gipsies, with the exquisite fourth and last lines:

"Perhaps when man has entered in
His perfect city free from sin,
The campers will come past the walls
With old lame horses full of galls,
And waggons hung about with withies,
And burning coke in tinkers' stithies,
And see the golden town, and choose,
And think the wild too good to lose,
And camp outside, as these camped then,
With wonder at the entering men."

It is to be hoped that Mr. Masfield will steadily develop along these lines. For new poetry we look indeed eagerly in these days, and are well schooled to disillusion. The first requisite of modern art—that the artist should seek the beautiful in common life—is at least amply recognised by Mr. Masfield. He may do much, if he will firmly cleave to this principle, give play to his imagination on its native ground, and distrust all inventions that force him to rhetoric.

THE CLOCKSMITH.

By JOHN HALSHAM.

AMONG the practitioners of those trades which once flourished in the village, and now linger on the verge of extinction, starved out by "inevitable economic changes", Simeon Nye the clocksmith holds a notable place. The very style is distinctive, like the little square-paned bay-window, showroom and workshop in one, like the stock-in-trade, the leisurely methods of business; it is a better title than the less archaic but doubly-lying legend, "Watchmaker and Jeweller", borne by the more ambitious business a little lower down the street. There is no sign of modern change in the clocksmith's shop. As the master grows older the dust thickens on the window panes, on the little trays of tarnished watch-chains and tie-pins of a rustic taste out-moded these thirty years, on the card, fallen face downwards on the sill, which once advertised the world that an apprentice was "wanted for repairs".

The customers who know the ways of the house (whether they come for repairs or for tobacco, which Simeon sells with an abstracted and off-hand manner, as if it were but an accidental adjunct of the languishing profession) knock violently on the shop door, and fill up the next ten minutes with any other business they may have in the street. The stranger who waits in the shop while the master is on his way from the back garden will soon exhaust his survey of the stock-in-trade. There are two tall clocks, ancient pieces in black oak cases, ticking together with a beat so grave that it seems meant to measure longer hours than we know; there are half-a-dozen cheap nickelled alarums and spiky-gabled wooden timepieces, to supply the popular demand; there is a fine bracket clock, a copy of a seventeenth-century design, and an elaborate non-descript in solid brass under a glass case. The little lathe and bench fill the window; by them stand the inverted bowls of three or four wine-glasses, one perhaps sheltering the movement of a watch under regulation. A dozen "dummy" tobacco-tins grace a shelf, and the dusty trays of chains and pins lie on the window-sill. There can be no doubt that the business is in a condition of decay.

When Simeon at length appears, wiping his hands upon his apron, and explaining that he was in the middle of setting his shallots or pricking out his auriculars, or feeding his Wyandottes, he presents a figure which a stranger would take rather for the blacksmith than the clocksmith. His frame is one of slack-built bulk, top-heavy with broad shoulders and large head somewhat conical and wholly bald; his hands are those of a giant, the unlikeliest in the world, anyone would say, to trust a watch to, unless he had seen the great loose-jointed fingers at their office, alive with the very spirit of fine touch and softest patience. There is never any hurry about work in Simeon Nye's shop. He will meet the customer's demand for a prompt diagnosis of a stoppage—dirt in the works, or a broken hair-spring?—with a general disquisition on the fallacy of cheap lines, which drifts into comparisons of standards of honesty at various periods of the trade, and ends in circumstantial histories of his younger days and his father's time. He will leave the ounce of bird's-eye in the scales, to explain the points of the timepieces in the shop. The tall clock with the fine brass face and the name "Jacob Chatfield" flourished below the winding-holes was made in the village a century and a half ago, in the days when every little country town possessed its artist, who, spite of doubtful tools and hand-cut pinions, turned out admirable work, and supplied every farmhouse and half the cottages with the "grandfathers" which our modern collectors buy up at fancy prices. That clock, Simeon says, has been his regulator for forty years. Its companion, with an enamelled face of rose-wreaths and a classical landscape, is more archaic in its works, driven by a hempen cord instead of a chain. Those others, the model of the Jacobean bracket clock, and the curious Chinese-looking timepiece with turned brass pillars and finials, are Simeon's own workmanship, specimens of what the little lathe and armoury of tools could do at

their best in the way of fitting and finish; left on his hands, he will tell you, as he puts them back a little roughly on the shelf: "There's no trade for work like that now".

Simeon is much more than a clocksmith. It has been suggested by philosophic neighbours that had he dispersed his genius less universally, he might have achieved a more material fame. He plays the bass-viol something more than enduringly, the instrument which his father performed upon in the church band, in company with a flute and a bassoon, before the western gallery was swept away by the restorers. He is a gardener and a bird-fancier, possessing in both fields all those curious gifts of instinct which make things grow and thrive as by a sort of infallible magic. He can produce out of his narrow strip of garden dahlias or auriculas, Wyandottes or Rouen ducks, which not once nor twice have beaten the most renowned competitors at the great shows. He does not do much in that way now, he says: "'tis a funny job, showing, whether 'tis flowers or birds—and then there's always the judges. . . . You don't stand to make much when it's all reckoned up". He recalls old shows, far afield: there was the pen of ducks which he made ten pounds by at Birmingham and London; there was the morning when a famous professional grower came and looked over his stand of fancy dahlias as he was setting them up, and turned away with the conclusive: "H'm! Then I don't show to-day". He descants upon the hundred little tricks and wrinkles in arranging and "dressing" exhibits, just on the nice edge of what is fair, which catch the eye of the hurried judge or decide his balanced taste, and turn a second-best plate of kidney beans or board of pansies into a well-earned first. Who but a genius, refusing to trust wholly to the effect of carefully timed condition-pills, would have thought of teaching his pen of ducks to take a worm from the end of a little stick, so that in the show tent they greeted the judge's wand (with which he lifts plumage and turns the birds about) with such engaging animation as made an instant certainty of the award? If histories such as these, circumstantially delivered while the client's watch is absently balanced and revolved by the great supple fingers, should move wonder as to how Simeon ever found time for such branches of learning over and above the study of his profession, the prompt reply is that when he was young he never wasted any time on schooling. He began to work at his father's bench when he was nine, he says, having taken in the ground-notions of horology earlier than that, perhaps. He is one of those who think that a lad to whom book learning will be of any use will get it for himself, somehow, school or no school, and all the better for his own finding. He himself, while he worked at the lathe and in the garden, and picked up his various technical accomplishments, took the three R's in his stride, reading odd numbers of the old Penny Cyclopædia which reposed beneath the bench in the shop without any conscious effort of acquirement, and summing in his head for amusement till he took to trigonometry at sixteen. Like others of his order, he has a profound contempt for the common products of the Council School, as he observes them during and after their course, delighting in the chance of putting a Sixth Standard younker, or even the fine flower of the pupil-teachers' centre through a public vivâ voce, and following the dissection and despatch of the victim with the triumphant jeer: "Goin' to learn others, and ha'n't got the brains to learn yourself!"

Progress touches the village street with no uncertain hand: the public mind develops, and Simeon is already a good deal isolated. He maintains alliance with two or three of the older tradesmen of his own standing; Joram Tugwell, the shoemaker, as distinct from the proprietor of the boot stores; Peter Rummery, the tailor, who makes corduroy breeches and servants' liveries, as distinct from the universal outfitter of the Emporium, with his sweated "lines" from White-chapel; and John Branch, the joiner, who makes the coffins for those who are not too proud to use the little box-hearse, instead of the glass coach from the county

town. But he is in touch most of all with the outliers of the parish, the people of an older tradition than is known in the street, who come down from the farms and cottages on Saturday nights to do their marketings and their circumstantial errands. One may see these, uncouth, bent figures, standing in the little shop on pouring winter nights, while the wet coats steam and the old green umbrella slowly makes a pool upon the floor, watching silently the cunning fingers conjure with the old turnip watch or the trashy American clock. They understand what it is to have a handicraft of one's own, and are understood in their turn as skilled men, artists at thatching, at shepherding, at ploughing, at wood-cutting, carters, stock-men, trappers, hedgers, bee-men. The most regular of these visitors is Harry Vinall, a little old man with a range of gifts as wide as Simeon Nye's, who, by his knowledge of wood-cutting, "throwing and flaving", wattle-making, hedging and thatching, mowing and cow-doctoring, is at seventy-five wanted at half the farms in the parish to do the work which none of the young men understand. Between the fine-fingered giant and the withered little greybeard with his stiffened and knotted hands there is a natural fellowship. Both the craftsmen are among the last representatives of the dying race of the universalists, the skilled men with the gift of doing divers things extremely well, a race which it would have been worth their country's while to keep alive by any sort of protective policy or sumptuary law. They do not talk about themselves; but they know the meaning of a nation of half-taught scribes; they have their views about the herd of vague incapables which the school discharges upon the village, mentally and physically incompetent to twist a withe into a faggot-band, or to meddle with mechanics beyond the winding of their five-shilling American watches. They have heard something, perhaps, of the talk about the monotony of village life, and think that the vanishing of the village workmen may have some bearing on the matter. The pair are, like most of their kind, wonderful in their age, the strength and the skill hardly touched by the seventy years. But the old men for the most part end suddenly; and when they are gone, the village street, once a sort of university of arts to the parish, will be nothing but a place of "branches" of soulless factories and firms, no one knows nor cares where. The country makes nothing now; more and more are we a mob, born to consume the fruits of earth. There will never be an apprentice at the clocksmith's again; the boys of the village make his door bell clink often enough, but the demand is for the eternal packet of cigarettes.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BRITAIN AND THE MONROE DOCTRINE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Kingston, Jamaica, 5 April 1912.

SIR,—This letter will seem hopelessly belated, I fear, seeing that it is now over a month since letters on this subject appeared in the SATURDAY REVIEW. Remember, pray, our distance and our consequent disabilities. And remember also that we in the British West Indies are far more gravely concerned in this question of American aggrandisement and domination than you at home. I have lived in the U.S., in Canada, and for some years in Cuba. I have observed and read widely and carefully, and I am convinced that the prevailing temper, attitude, and feeling in the U.S. towards England is far from friendly. Let the provocation be ever so slight, you would see the hot flame of anger that would spring up in the States against us. The smouldering embers of hostility that were left by the War of Independence and the war of 1812 have been sedulously fanned by the garbled school histories and popular fiction that American children and the less cultured classes read. And whenever it is possible the fact that in the Civil War (1861-3) the sympathies of a large proportion of English people were with the South is harped upon with almost savage bitterness. Even

if we could count upon the entire goodwill and friendly forbearance of the U.S. towards us, the Monroe Doctrine would still constitute a serious danger for Great Britain. The territory of the U.S. covers less than one-third of the whole American continent. How unreasonable, how arrogant, then, is the claim set up by it to be cock-o'-the-walk over it all! Adding the extent of Canada to British Guiana, British Honduras, and the West Indies, Great Britain, it will be found, has larger possessions in the American continent than the U.S. Suppose some dispute arose between Great Britain and a Central or South American Republic, Peru, Chile, the Argentine, Venezuela, or Brazil, and the case were one in which we could not permit a third party to interfere, we must, if the Monroe Doctrine is to stand, either fight the U.S. or stoop to dictation.

Occasions for controversy are more likely to arise after the opening of the Panama Canal for trade with Central and South America, intercourse and investment of capital will be stimulated and will expand. At present there is enormously more British capital invested in Central and South America than U.S. capital. Throughout these countries, too, Americans are dreaded and disliked, while Englishmen are liked and esteemed. In violation of the spirit, if not of the letter, of treaty obligations, the U.S. are strongly fortifying the Panama Canal, also the harbour of Honolulu. They already possess naval harbours and stations in Cuba, Porto Rico, and San Domingo.

The British West Indies are at the present moment utterly unprotected. With its usual careless lethargy, our Government is just opening one eyelid, as it were, and is to send next June a naval commission of inquiry to discover what should be done to strengthen our West Indian position. A glance at the map will demonstrate clearly enough that Trinidad and Jamaica at the least must needs be fortified, and be provided with docks and coaling stations. Jamaica, situate in the main ocean highway for the Canal and so near to it, requires to be taken in hand immediately. It is humiliating to see so often in our Kingston harbour German and American men-of-war and only very rarely one of our vessels. And in our streets, above hotels and shops, more of the Stars and Stripes than of the Union Jack. Every now and then an impudent proposal is put forward by some American politician or newspaper for the acquisition by the U.S. of the British West Indies. Thank heaven as yet the notion is as hateful to the West Indian people as is to the Canadians the idea of annexation to the U.S. It is well to bear in mind that the disloyal Irish, practically Fenians, in the U.S. are a very powerful body, and that they not only control newspaper policies, but largely colour popular opinion and the views of public men. Hence no opportunity is lost in platform and journalistic utterances of vilifying and belittling England and all things English. During the last twenty years we have given way too much and too frequently to the U.S., until the popular belief there is that whenever they insist we shall submit.

It is a thousand pities that England, France, and Germany did not long ago unite in denouncing the monstrous pretensions of the Monroe Doctrine, and thus reserve to themselves the right to ignore its claims and resist their maintenance. The U.S. aim now to dominate the Caribbean and later on the Pacific. We ought to aim at giving Japan the Philippines and Germany a hold by purchase of territory in South America. Then there would exist a counterpoise to American ambitions and American aggression. When the States have swallowed up Mexico, how long will the Central American Republics retain their independence? And after they have been sucked into the Union what will be the fate of the magnificent and vast South American countries. And where then will be our immense trade with all these? We shall be walled out by the high Customs tariff of the States. The English people and the Government are living in a fool's paradise as regards our relations with the U.S. Some day there will be a sad awakening.

Your obedient servant, H. S. BUNBURY.

ITALY IN TRIPOLI.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

40 Leinster Square, Bayswater W.
11 May 1912.

SIR,—I always read your correspondence regarding the misconduct of the Italians in the Near East with more than usual approval. My own experience of their diplomacy renders me a capable critic of their "foolhardiness", as Mr. Grahame McQuilquham rightly terms the aggression on Turkish territory.

Could the tale of the long and weary attempt that I have fought alone (almost) to obtain justice for the outrage inflicted on my person forty years ago near Naples be known in England as it ought, we should hear less of hybrid Anglo-Italians defending the wrongdoers' claim to English love of right dealing.

I wrote a letter in the "Academy", 18 November 1911, quoting a "Times" correspondent, 14 September 1882, telling "of the atrocious caricatures which were our sole reward for helping on the freedom and unity of Italy".

Surely Mr. Richard Bagot earns his Italian laurels cheaply, blindly following the "Tribuna's" rodomontade of traditional friendship between our two countries; when as a fact the "Tribuna" itself headed the long list of Italian journals which gloried in any defeat of English arms during the Boer War, as it also did in the Egyptian War (1882) against Arabi Pasha.

Lately I wrote in the "Pall Mall Gazette" concerning this Tripolitan act of brigandage (6 October 1911), seeing modern Italy "is a Power itself only half-fledged". I have found law in Italy a lottery, I may call it a throw of the dice; in my case it was all empty smoke, and I can truly say Italians do not know what even-handed justice is!

My old friend Ouida dealt with cases such as Paola Lombroso's in 1898, and exposed the legal falsehood that is emblazoned behind the judgment seats of all magistrates in Italy, "Every man is equal before the law".

England was held responsible for the Italian failure in Abyssinia, and already voices are heard whispering that England encouraged "Italy in Tripoli".

I am ready and willing to substantiate all my statements herein and elsewhere contained, and if any Italian, or Italianate Englishman, ventures to contradict my words, he will find documentary chapter and verse for all I ever have written or spoken.

Repeatedly and abundantly I have challenged all former Italian detractors, and yet curiously I have never met or discovered any individual who has cared to contradict me in or out of print.

Surely their Machiavellian diplomacy is fully exhausted, now they have nothing to gain, or I to lose.

Yours truly,

WILLIAM MERCER.

"PARLIAMENTARY REMINISCENCES."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

London, 14 May 1912.

SIR,—In his interesting book thus entitled, Mr. Jeans relates of Robert Lowe M.P. that he was conscious of his own failings, as the grimly humorous epitaph that he composed on himself amply testifies. Mr. Jeans adds "Many versions have been published, but probably the following is the best:

'Here lie the bones of Robert Lowe,
A treacherous friend, a bitter foe;
Whither his restless soul has fled
May not be thought, much less be said.
If to the realms of peace and love,
Farewell to happiness above,
If to a place of lower level,
We can't congratulate the devil'."

I think Mr. Jeans has fallen into error here. The lines were, I believe, composed impromptu by a member, and being passed round the House they had an hilarious

reception. Translations innumerable in many tongues were made of them, and among these was a Latin one by Mr. Lowe himself. I treasure the copy which he gave me. It runs as follows:

"Robertus Humilis hic jacet,
Qui nobis (mortuus) valde placet.
Amicus minime fidelis,
Amarus hostis et crudelis.
Quænam conditio sit futura
Ambigitur, sed spero dura.
Si cælum scandet ista pestis,
Vale concordia cœlestis.
Si apud inferos jacebit,
Diabolum ejus pœnitebit
Et nos diaboli miserebit".

Another amusing story narrated by Mr. Jeans is the incident of the cat in 1874, thus: "White a member was addressing the House, a cat sprang from under the benches and bounded across the heads and shoulders of members. The movements of the cat excited a good deal of commotion, but in the end it disappeared through the door".

Somebody wrote on this:

"Unable longer to endure
The ooze of dull oration,
The very cat sprang from the floor
And fled in desperation".

Who was the author?

Your obedient servant,
H. D. ELLIS.

THE SUFFRAGETTE IN GREEK.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

La Salle, Illinois, U.S.A., 5 May 1912.

SIR,—Among the faithful to whom the SATURDAY REVIEW is no less dear than it is to Miss Powell are many exiles whose lot is periodically brightened by its advent. Permit one of these, a mesogaian of the Western Continent, to express his wonder at learning through your pages of the existence of a Poets' Club in the Elysian Fields, and of the discussion therein by the genus irritable of our mundane suffragette problem. One can but fear that henceforth our old-time convictions respecting Elysian conditions—everlasting calm and so forth—will have to be considerably modified, and imagination feebly endeavours to portray what Sappho (of the subtle flame and glowing bosom) does when Euripides "has the floor". For was it not Euripides who for ever barred woman from all active participation in the consideration of momentous and weighty matters?

φιλόσογον δὲ χρῆμα θηλειῶν ἔφν
σμικρὰς δ' ἀφορμὰς ἦν λάβωσι τῶν λόγων,
πλείους ἐπεισφέροντι, κ.τ.λ.

("Phœnissæ," 205-7.)

Apart from the casual appearances of the necessary strong-handed accomplisshers (or executioners) of the will of the *σεμναὶ θεαὶ* the women of the tragedies are the chief factors, instigators and protagonists, even when (as in the "Electra") woman herself vaunts her essential subordination and inferiority.

If there be also a philosophers' club in Elysium, and the question were submitted to its members, I think the decision would be that for the Governments of Earth to refuse to women the right of thus expressing their convictions is logically unorthodox. That these sages would unanimously declare that the tactics of "the Pankhurst crew" are not the best means of securing this right I freely admit,—it is, of course, much to be deplored that the aspirations of woman to obtain for herself that which is accorded to the man, without distinction of mountebank or clodpole, should be accompanied by the "wild ebullience of the Helot".

It may be decreed that man's resipiscencia and the attainment of equality by woman must be preceded by Armageddon and the fulfilment of that ancient predic-

tion which Bacon admitted that he did "not well understand", but which Englishmen now may not find it hard to interpret:—

"There shall be seen upon a day,
Between the Baugh and the May,
The black fleet of Norway.
When that is come and gone,
England build houses of lime and stone,
For after wars shall you have none."

God grant that it may go, leaving us with the benison of Pindar:

ἀλλὰ κούφοισιν ἐκνεῦσαι ποσὶν
Ζεῦ τέλει, αἰδῶ διδοῖς,
καὶ τύχην τερπνῶν γλυκεῖαν.

Yours faithfully,
M. C. O'BYRNE J.P.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

13 May 1912.

SIR,—I had intended writing if no one had noticed the ridiculous statement of Solomon ben David re male births. On that fact lay the whole point of an amusing altercation at a small suffrage meeting. An ardent spinster was holding forth, painting in brilliant colours the millennium that would arrive directly women were given the vote. It was pointed out that a limited vote could not hope to win the Labour party or democratic feeling, and a larger enfranchisement meant swamping the men by a large preponderance of women.

The sentimental spinster said, "Oh, but dear A., we shall take such care of all the boy babies that in a very few years they will outnumber the girls". Whereupon a cruel and incredulous married anti-suffragist retorted "Nonsense, my dear H., why, you don't know one end of a baby from the other", and the whole assembly roared, but the spinster was deeply hurt. Lady Grove's quotation, a well-known one, reminded me of a theory I have always held; and I should much like to know if it can be substantiated by figures, namely, that of the poor little bodies found and presumably mostly illegitimate by far the greater number are of male children. It seems odd that with all our eugenic talk and our enormous strides in scientific and biological knowledge no real discovery has been made concerning sex-determinants. I have a theory, but again do not know if it can be verified by facts.

Yours truly,
"PRIMROSE DAME."

"BE BRITISH!"

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—When Lady Grove takes up her pen I am always eager to read what she has to say. On whatever subject she writes (aspirated or not aspirated) she is vehement and assured, this in a wobbling age is something to be thankful for, and in addition she is sure to give me, what I am always ready to pay for—a laugh.

In her letter last week, to which I immediately turned, I found a point raised that I had never thought of, and which I confess has puzzled me. Passing over the fact that at present it seems unproved that the fateful words that roused such fierce disapproval were ever spoken, let us assume they were. Surely in such a moment, trying to inspire courage, it would have been tactless, to say the least of it, on the part of an English captain on an English ship, to shout to his crew and passengers "Be Japanese!"

Even if the idea of discourteous boastfulness towards other nations had occurred to him, he would have recognised that it was not the exact moment to attempt an avoidance of self-righteous complacency. I think he would have felt that his appeal would have been weakened and his hearers confused if he had reminded them just then that there were other brave men in the

world. It is probable he trusted more to the sentiment involved in his shout than to the geographical definition of the words themselves.

Yours faithfully,
BETA.

WHAT WAS SHAKESPEARE'S RELIGION?

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Armstrong College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne,
6 May 1912.

SIR,—Your correspondent will find an interesting essay upon the subject of the religion of Shakespeare in the late Professor Churton Collins' "Ephemera Critica". Most of the essays in that volume, I believe, appeared originally in the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Your correspondent will find a number of references that bear upon the question he raises. Churton Collins concludes with these words: "It may be that what we are certainly warranted in concluding about him, represents all that can be concluded, namely, that: He at least believed in soul, was very sure of God."

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,
HAROLD P. COOKE.

"THE INCONSTANT MOON."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

H.M.S. "Superb", Portland.

SIR,—I see that one of your correspondents on "The Inconstant Moon" recalls the famous star blunder from "Hard Times". A fellow to this may be found in a work of a distinguished living novelist, which, if not so patent to common sense, is yet clearly a case where Stevenson's good advice about the almanack, quoted by another correspondent, is pertinent.

Mr. Maurice Hewlett, in his "Rest Harrow", gives us a vivid picture of a midnight vigil of his hero, Jack Senhouse. The time is about midsummer, the place a lonely valley among the hills, in Wiltshire, or Somerset, or thereabouts. Now Mr. Senhouse is no ordinary observer who just happens to find himself looking up at a starry sky, as even the grossest grocer or the most soulless stockbroker sometimes does. We have known him through a whole trilogy of novels as a peripatetic philosopher, an advanced Borrow, a consistent follower of the open-air life. A scientific one, too: he wanders over Europe sowing the wild places with flowers: his intimacy with Nature is emphasised, not to say "rubbed in": he has just been preaching with easy familiarity to a congregation of hares.

Now the scene—the silence, the remoteness, the magic of the summer night—is admirably realised, and had Mr. Hewlett been content, as novelists usually prudently are, with generalities about "the stars" all would have been well; but unluckily Mr. Hewlett definitely places for us in the star-sown sky two heavenly bodies, Jupiter and Sirius. The planet is a happy choice, for planets are so subtly inconstant as to furnish much safer handling than the moon.

But the star Sirius! One does not need to be an astronomer or a high priest of Nature to find something strange here. I suppose there are hundreds of people in this country without any claim to be one or the other who know by sight a dozen or so of the greater stars; and the number will certainly include Sirius, by far the brightest of them all. But what associations has Sirius for the minds of such people? Surely not with the warm calm nights of July, but rather with keen frosty evenings in January.

And naturally so, for Sirius is, in England, purely a winter star, and never has been and never can be seen in July at all. Sirius, in fact, reaches its highest visible point at noon on 1 July, at 10 A.M. on 1 August, and so on; and since, in Senhouse's latitude, it takes about four and a half hours to rise or set, it is clearly impossible that we should see it during the short summer nights. The philosopher must have been looking at Vega.

Yours faithfully,
R. N.

THE ACADEMY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

9 Southampton Street W.C.
13 May 1912.

SIR,—I was so pleased to read the article by Mr. C. H. Collins Baker about this year's Academy. Particularly was I pleased with his outspoken and accurate criticism of the absurd Royal portraits and the abominable advertisements of the old business men with double chins, triple abdomens and faces like salmon cutlets. Why, may I ask, when realism has been carried to such an extent in reproducing a person's abdominal hypertrophy, why, oh! why should it all be spoilt by giving these tough old people faces like unto a new-born babe, when it is obvious that nobody with a face of that nature could consent to sit for a portrait with a huge advertisement grasped firmly in the hand?

O, sir, I realise the truth, the sincerity, the courage, the ability of your critic—it brings back vividly the sufferings of years—and I venture to say that he is doing the cause of true art a great service.

I may mention that I have seen all the exhibitions of recent years, and when all the pictures are in I intend to go to this one. It would be a sinful waste of money, not to mention nerve tissue, to go now and have to pay another shilling to see some more "royal" art.

Perhaps you will allow me to say that I am astounded at your critic's moderation. I have seen the "landslide" for years—nothing but an avalanche will clear away the débris. It must be awful this year—an abyss of "stodge".

Yours very truly,
P. A. VAILE

SPIRITISM AND IMMORALITY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

8 May 1912.

SIR,—Will you spare me a few lines of your valuable space to remark, in reference to your paragraph on the Syms and Izard case in your issue of 4 May, that spiritism is a cloak for immorality, with very few exceptions? The exceptions are people who discover before it is too late that the communicating spirits are not the souls of deceased friends or relatives, but are evil spirits, otherwise demons, personating the dead, with a view to get the living into their power by weakening their will power, thus depriving them of the Divine gift given to enable men to resist temptation, and leaving them open to the influence of every passing demon. Victims to spiritism fill the asylums and swell the list of suicides. I have investigated spiritism to its depths under its various guises (of course, carefully guarded), and have found my conclusions correct.

Yours faithfully,
BRIDEY M. O'REILLY.

INDIGNATA SUB UMBRAS.

I WONDER which hath triumphed, you or Death?

For he has torn you ultimately from your place,
And shattered all the woman in your face,
And put his last injunction on your breath,
And ferried you across to his dim stait
Where there is none who hath either hope or grace,
But only the unimaginable race
Of broken souls blackness encompasseth.

O pitiful and pitiful! And yet
Not all he asks is yielded up to him,
And we who fight have our shrewd joy therefor:
Upon your brow sitteth a shining, grim
Rapture of wars, and on your lips is set
To-night, the still smile of the conqueror.

T. W. H. C.

REVIEWS.

"MAY I SAY SO?"

"Anglo-American Memories." By George W. Smalley. Second Series. London: Duckworth. 1912. 12s. 6d. net.

JOURNALISM has many branches, from the reporter in the police courts to the interviewer in high places. Badly paid as he is, we are not sure we would not rather be the humble scribe of sensations than the interviewer who glides about in society, button-holing the great ones of the earth, but obliged to close a confidential conversation with the inevitable query, "May I say so?" We can conceive no greater humiliation, which Mr. Stead, we have been told, avoided by the simple expedient of going straight away from the interview and publishing everything he had been asked to regard as confidential. Mr. Stead, of course, defeated his own object, for he got himself labelled "indiscreet", and no one would tell him anything. Mr. Smalley is too clever and too honourable for that: he observes the rules of the game. And so he has been courted and caressed for the last twenty years by the politicians of two continents, who knew that his "May I say so?" could be relied on. It has been Mr. Smalley's function to play the interpreter of the English to the Americans, and of the Americans to the English, acting as the special correspondent of the "Times" in New York and of the "Tribune" in London. Mr. Smalley has discharged his duty to his employers with industry and ability, and as regards those whom he interviewed with an amiability which is not so very amiable when we reflect that most of his interviewees are alive and still powerful personages. There is, however, one notable exception to the flattering sketches of great men with which Mr. Smalley presents his two publics, and it makes the most readable chapter of the book, preferring as we do acid-drops to strawberry jam. We mean the article on the late Lord Goschen, whom Mr. Smalley quite evidently did not like. Lord Goschen committed the unpardonable gaucherie of treating Mr. Smalley as an American, and when he found himself next the "Tribune's" correspondent after dinner would ask him questions about American politics, instead of detailing the latest gossip of S. Stephen's. Thus Mr. Smalley found that instead of pumping Goschen, Goschen was pumping him, a process very trying to the temper of a special correspondent. But the chapter as a diagnosis of character is good, for Goschen was an argumentative, ungenial, and pompous person, except to a very few male intimates and to all women. Very characteristic is Goschen's annoyance when Mr. Smalley agreed with him, and his interrupting with "No, no, that is not what I want". Goschen was never really happy except when he was arguing, which he did well enough, but with too much eagerness for the enjoyment of his company. The chapters on English statesmen, written for the American public, are cleverly arranged so that a picture is presented of the best English society with Mr. Smalley as the centre of the group. Thus: "It was after dinner at Wynyard Park, the house filled with people, most of them celebrities. I was standing with Mr. Balfour, British fashion, on the hearthrug before a lighted fire. He had heard I meant to write a book, a comparative study of English and American politics, and other matters, and asked some questions. Presently he said: 'Well, you have had great opportunities. You ought to write such a book. Have you begun it?' 'No.' 'Then go upstairs now, and write the first chapter.'" Unless Mr. Smalley had told us so, we should never have divined that this picture, with its Watteau grouping, was an illustration of Mr. Balfour's "power of an instant response to a demand of instant brain-work at full speed ahead". Without the guiding light of the author's explanation, we confess that we should have put it down as an invention to make Mr. Smalley's countrymen gape, for the impertinence is almost incredible, and very unlike Mr.

Balfour. By the way, how does Mr. Smalley know that Mr. Balfour is a sincere convert to Tariff Reform? His positive assertion on the point reminds us of the French marquise who silenced a gossip by the simple question, "Comment faites-vous, monsieur, pour être si sûr de ces choses-là?"

The most interesting portion of this book, the most earnest and most eloquent, is that devoted to Lord Pauncefote, whom Mr. Smalley describes as the greatest Ambassador England ever sent to America. The story which he tells of the attempt made by the French Ambassador of the day, M. Jules Cambon, and the German Emperor to embroil England with the United States and to ruin Lord Pauncefote constitutes a very odious charge against those august persons. In 1898 the United States declared war against Spain on the subject of Cuba. The European Powers, with the exception of Great Britain, sympathised with Spain. The representatives of five Continental Powers, under the influence of M. Jules Cambon and Baron Holleben, the German Ambassador, entrapped Lord Pauncefote (according to Mr. Smalley) into signing and forwarding as his own to the English Foreign Office a dispatch, drafted in the first instance by Lord Pauncefote but cunningly amended by M. Cambon, recommending a joint European remonstrance against the war with Spain. Lord Salisbury and Lord Sanderson were not taken in, and the dispatch was pigeon-holed. Four years later the German Foreign Office declared, by means of a sensational cable to the American papers, that Lord Pauncefote was the author of a plot to bring about a European confederation against the United States, and offered to produce the Cambonised dispatch, identical editions of which had been forwarded by the five Ambassadors to their respective Governments. Luckily President Roosevelt saw through the attempt to make bad blood between England and the United States, and the German telegram fell like a damp rocket. The German Emperor disclaimed responsibility, and recalled Holleben in disgrace. Mr. Smalley openly accuses the German Emperor of having concocted the sensational cable, and only repudiating his Ambassador when the trick failed. We know not what truth there may be in this accusation: but it is indisputable that the French and German Ambassadors at Washington played a trick upon their colleague.

There are some chapters on the American millionaires, Messrs. Pierpont Morgan, Carnegie, and Waldorf Astor, which interest us not at all, for these plutocratic monsters are, outside the region of stock-jobbing and company-promotion, absolutely commonplace individuals. They cannot even tell us how they amassed their millions, or they will not. Messrs. Carnegie and Astor have honoured this country by choosing it as the place in which to live, and Mr. Morgan has two houses in London. It never seems to strike Mr. Smalley, or any American journalist, that this desertion of their country by the millionaires is at all ungraceful. It is really an illustration of the truth of Burke's saying that in order that men may love their country it must be lovely. There are many at work to make England as unlovely a country as the United States. What then will become of the millionaires? Where will they live? Mr. Smalley is a sound Conservative and a strong Unionist, and we are quite willing to put his politics in the scale against his foibles as a journalist, and to continue to welcome him as a useful if unaccredited Ambassador between the two Anglo-Saxon nations—and Mr. Smalley may say so.

PERSIAN TRAVEL AND RESEARCH.

"From Constantinople to the Home of Omar Khayyam." By A. V. Williams Jackson. New York: Macmillan. 1911. 15s. net.

MR. WILLIAMS JACKSON, professor of Indo-Iranian languages in Columbia University, is a scholar who has carried out various journeys in the Middle East for the sake of historic and literary

research. He has written on "Persia, Past and Present", and this book is a record of the first half of a subsequent tour through Transcaucasia, Northern Iran, Transcaspia and Turkistan in 1907 and 1908. The greater part of the volume is occupied by the narrative of an expedition from Teheran to Nishapur, Omar Khayyam's home, and thence to the sacred city of Meshed or Mashad. Mr. Jackson's work may, therefore, be labelled as another contribution to our extensive literature of Persian travel; but it has distinction. In the first place it is thoroughly readable—which is more than can be said for the ordinary account of an Englishman's adventures and sensations along Persian tracks and in the wasted cities of Iran. Secondly, Mr. Jackson never shows a trace either of ill-humour or of condescension—one or the other of which is usually too evident in the pages of English writers on Persia. His good spirits are wonderful. Yet what an air of desolation is conveyed by the many excellent photographs of his book! We pity the Russian soldiers who may be in garrison along the line of Alexander's march after Darius—by Ragha, Aivan-i-Kair, the Caspian Gates. It is hard to think that history was ever made in these places. As they say, One cannot go to war about Persia.

There is, besides, Mr. Jackson's scholarship. He writes most engagingly on monuments, ancient inscriptions and the like, he always holds the layman's attention and was right not to designate certain chapters, "for the special student", as he had at first thought of doing. From the point of view of historic and literary research his tour seems to have been a success, and will have inspired several monographs. One has, at the same time, a pleasant feeling that the Columbian professor was on a holiday. Nothing simpler, by the way, for a Columbian professor than to get leave of absence, provided that he has got scholarly aims in view! It was at the Charity Ball at Yonkers that Mr. Jackson chanced to be talking to a friend about the success which the evening had proved despite a furious snowstorm. Somehow the conversation veered round to travel in the Orient; perhaps he "recalled snows he had encountered in Iran"; and a moment later he and his friend resolved to take a trip together to Persia and Central Asia. Eastward Ho! again—for the third or fourth time in as many years.

The chapter on Teheran contains some particular features of interest—namely, the account of an interview with the ex-Shah, a discussion with regard to the Takht-i Ta'ūs, and views on Persian nationalism. Mr. Jackson was not impressed by the modern occupant of a throne once sat upon by mighty kings. He believed that the Constitution should give the people "a new idea, a new possibility, a new power". The Persian "question", however, hardly comes within his province, and it is a pity that he does not omit all reference to it, for he must have known before his manuscript was in print that he had turned out a bad prophet. Professor Browne has been his guide here. We noticed the curious omission of Gobineau's "Trois Ans en Asie" from Mr. Jackson's long and otherwise representative list of works of reference; now, Gobineau, who was as good a lover of Iran and as great a Persian scholar as either Professor Browne or Mr. Jackson, had besides a true understanding of Oriental politics. Alone among Europeans, he succeeded in interpreting Persian affairs in the light of the national character. Mr. Jackson would do well to read the "Trois Ans" before he ventures again upon prophecy. He is, however, in his element in discussing the history of the Peacock Throne (the Takht-i Ta'ūs), a truly romantic subject, and examines the arguments of Lord Curzon and other authorities with a great zest. It is apparently insoluble, this problem whether the present coronation chair of the Kajars is or is not the great trophy carried away from Hindustan by Nadir Shah in 1749. Our author's field is not a new one, but his knowledge of what has been done there by his predecessors stands him in good stead. Baku, the town of blue flame by the lake at the world's edge, gave occasion for an interesting piece of historical writing, so did an expedition thence to little-

known Derbent, the Caspiæ Portæ of the Romans. These are not the real Caspian Gates, which Mr. Jackson, following the tracks of Alexander the Great, afterwards located at the Sar-Darrah Pass, a day's journey east of Teheran. It was through this gorge, cutting across a spur of the Elburz range, that Alexander the Great pursued Darius Codomannus to his death on the plain of Khvar.

KATHERINE AND MARY GREY.

"The Sisters of Lady Jane Grey." By Richard Davey. London: Chapman and Hall. 1911. 12s. 6d. net.

ONE reads this book with a continual sense of what we have lost in Mr. Richard Davey's death; for it well sustains the high reputation he made as the biographer of Lady Jane Grey. This is the history of Lady Jane's sisters, and introduces to us some interesting and little-known chapters in the history of early Elizabethan days. To these chapters are prefixed an account of the early Tudors and of his heroine's wicked grandfather, Thomas Brandon of Suffolk, and they invite some criticism.

It is curious how little interest English writers (and Mr. Davey was no exception) show in the ancestors of Owen Tudor. They smile at the fictitious pedigree that traced the house from Coel, King of Britain, and brother of Helen, the mother of Constantine, and rush to the conclusion that Owen was a mere soldier of fortune. A little research would show them that even if we allow the famous pedigree to be a pure forgery, Owen's family played a considerable part in Welsh history from the fourteenth century. One member of the house was a friend of the Black Prince. Owen's own father Meredyth was on his mother's side a cousin of the great Glendower and bore the sword in the last of the Welsh wars. One may naturally assume that when Glendower's son took service with Henry V. Owen Tudor followed his example. The connexion of the House of Tudor with Glendower's movement had a decisive influence on its destiny, for it brought Welsh enthusiasm to the aid of Henry of Richmond when he landed at Milford, and gave him his victory at Bosworth. Owen Tudor left three sons, Edmund the father of Henry VII., Jasper and Owen. Our author goes somewhat wrong as to Jasper. He did not die young in 1456. He passed away aged about sixty years in 1495, having played a considerable part in the Wars of the Roses. Nor was he buried in S. David's Cathedral. In his will he expressed a wish to be buried at Keynsham Abbey, near Bristol. It is Edmund Tudor who lies in the chancel of S. David's Cathedral, to which his body was removed after the dissolution of the Grey Friars' Convent at Carmarthen, where it had first been interred. If the author is disappointing in his treatment of the Welsh Tudors, he gives us by way of amends an interesting sketch of the rise of the Brandons and a powerful portrait of Thomas Brandon, the wicked Duke of Suffolk and the grandfather of his heroines. Space forbids us to follow this portion of the volume. Probably the history of Mary Tudor's marriage with Louis XII. and her marriage later with Suffolk has never been more fully or more picturesquely told in the English language. We pass to the heroines of the volume. Little is remembered of Jane Grey's two ill-starred sisters, Katherine and Mary. Indeed historians have blundered badly about them. Froude actually states that Mary Grey was married in 1553. Her unlucky wedding in fact was solemnised in 1565. In 1553 Mary was eight years old.

Katherine Grey was in some ways a more interesting character than was her sister Jane. Tragic as was her fate, the nine days' queen was, as our author says, the victim of the acts of others. Katherine Grey on the other hand appears as a strong character who plays a certain part on the political stage and who deliberately works out her own fate. Her childhood's days at Bradgate were certainly happier than those of the unlucky Jane, who was from her infancy crammed for

the position of a Calvinist queen. Katherine on the other hand led a natural life, enjoying hunting and archery and the normal pastimes of the period. Then falls on her youth the tragedy that sends her sister and father to the block, and the disgrace of her mother's second marriage. Katherine and her sister, their father's property being confiscated, are now left by their unnatural parent, as our author puts it, to Providence and the Queen. Strange as it may seem, the happiest years of Katherine's life were those that she spent as a pensioner at Mary's Court. Our author has a deep regard for that unhappy Queen, and he gives us an interesting sketch of her few days of sunshine when the Prince of Spain came with Alva and with Egmont to wed her at St. Swithun's shrine. We get a sight of Katherine Grey in the red lacquered chariot lined with crimson velvet that carried the Queen over the rough and rain-splashed roads between London and Winchester, and we see her again on the wedding day walking from Gardiner's Palace to the Cathedral in the bridal procession behind the Queen and Lady Margaret Lennox. It is in these days that the love affair between young Hertford and Katherine begins, and our author opines that if Mary Tudor's life had been prolonged the marriage would have been celebrated with the royal approval. It is interesting to realise that Katherine in these days not merely attended Roman Catholic worship, but that she was both at this time, and probably to the end of her life, a sincere Romanist. The accession of Elizabeth altered Katherine's position for the worse. She was in the first years of the new reign a far greater danger to the Queen than was Mary Queen of Scots. Not only had she been named successor in a special Act of Parliament and in two royal wills. Her claims had the enthusiastic backing of the Puritan party in the House of Commons, who naturally assumed her to be a Calvinist, and at one time at least of Philip of Spain and his ambassador, who believed her to be at heart a Catholic.

Prejudiced as Mr. Davey was against Elizabeth, he admits that Katherine was at first kindly treated. Her clandestine marriage with Hertford was however not only a rash defiance of the Queen but a breach of the law; and things being as they were, we cannot be surprised that she and her husband were severely punished. Nor can we find in this interesting narrative the faintest evidence that there was any intention to do Katherine slowly to death. When the plague broke out in London she was removed from the Tower to her uncle's country house at Pirgo in one of the Queen's own carriages, and in her subsequent captivity in the melancholy abodes of Gossfield Hall and Cockfield she seems, though carefully guarded, to have been treated with consideration and to have enjoyed the company possibly of her monkeys and certainly of her dogs. Her fate was no harder than that of Arabella Stuart, and far milder than that of Mary Stuart and of her own sister Jane. Her passion was her undoing; but her early death was probably due to a naturally weak constitution. The story of Mary Grey is a repetition of her sister's fate dashed with a touch of comedy. Like her, she married against Elizabeth's will, and found herself doomed to a weary durance. Only her husband, the Sergeant-porter of the water gate, was in the lower ranks of society, and while he was a giant she was a dwarf. The poor fellow rued his marriage bitterly, but Mary had the luck to obtain Elizabeth's pardon before she sank into her early grave. Mr. Davey spared no pains in piecing together the scattered materials in the State papers and other documents that bear on the lives of these two ill-starred princesses, and the book is one of lasting historic value. But he was unduly prejudiced against Elizabeth, and went too far when he insisted that Leicester was guilty of Amy Robsart's death and that Elizabeth consented. The true verdict is "Non proven".

BRET HARTE'S QUARRY.

"The Life of Bret Harte, with some account of the California Pioneers." By Henry Childs Merwin. London: Chatto and Windus. 1912. 10s. 6d. net.

FROM Boswell to Lockhart and from Forster to Mr. Monypenny biographers seem to betray an ivy-like tendency to twine themselves about their subjects, and Mr. Merwin in his "Life of Bret Harte" is not an exception. Out of 346 pages of text he devotes 160, or very nearly one-half of the book, to "some account" of the pioneers. So much more interesting than the "Life" is the subsidiary matter that title and sub-title might well have changed places. And the notable point is that Mr. Merwin was right in his proportions. Consciously or unconsciously he had twined himself about his subject, and the result was a study of pioneer life with an embroidery of Bret Harte round it.

The seventeen years spent in California were Bret Harte's period of harvesting. He arrived there from New York in March 1854, when he was scarcely eighteen, and returned in February 1871, famous in both America and England. Something of the swift and fabulous fortunes that dropped upon those western Argonauts fell upon their chronicler as well. Time then, in that place, seemed to suffer a kind of compression. In 1851 men talked of the "good old days" of '49. When Stephen J. Field, later a justice of the United States Supreme Court, presented himself as a candidate for the office of Alcalde in a town called Marysville, the supporters of a rival candidate decried him as a new-comer. He had been there but three days. The other man had lived there no less than six days. For a man with the literary habit to be in California at that period and not to write would have been impossible. Just as Stevenson in the present generation made of every journalist something of a stylist, so Dickens in the 'fifties and 'sixties made of everyone something of a sentimental writer. Nowhere do sentiment and sentimentality flourish so luxuriously as in a camp or colony where women are at a premium. It is recorded by Mr. Merwin that a group of miners paused before the verandah of a house where a small child was playing, and tears ran down their faces as they contemplated the unwonted spectacle. Men frequently camped all night on the waterfront in San Francisco awaiting the arrival of a ship with letters from home—the same men who drank and fought and gambled, and pursued their epic quest for gold. The vigilance committee and the insane asylum were the first public necessities. The asylum at Stockton was actually the first building erected by the State. It was almost immediately filled. The professional gambler with his superb calm and disciplined nerves necessarily became a power in the community and a hero of romance. Such was the material that lay ready to Bret Harte's hand when he left the compositor's case in the office of the "Golden Era" to join the editorial staff of that sheet.

In the presentation of this material lies the value of Mr. Merwin's book. A previous Life, by T. Edgar Pemberton, though somewhat of a rhapsody, has at least the merit of considerable first-hand knowledge of the subject, for biographer and author had long been friends. Arid breaks in Harte's post-Californian period are, at all events, bridged by some interesting letters, a feature to which good biographies have accustomed us. Mr. Merwin's book contains almost no letters. It adds little to our knowledge of the man, and such chapters as the last four on Bret Harte as a writer of fiction, as a poet, a stylist, and one on the pioneer dialect, are less in the domain of the biographer than in that of the critic. It is conceivable that Mr. Merwin began the study of his theme with the hopes of a high reward in opulence of material, but ultimately discovered that Bret Harte's California life was only little more interesting than his later years. If the man and the writer proved less great than the enthusiasm of the biographer had anticipated, he may be credited with the sense of justice and proportion that prevented him from over-emphasising.

THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

"Primitive Christianity: its Writings and Teaching in their Historical Connections." By Otto Pfeiderer. Translated by W. Montgomery. Vol. IV. London: Williams and Norgate. 1911. 10s. 6d. net.

THERE can be no doubt that the whole Johannine question will need to be re-studied in a scientific manner by scholars, and the same careful analysis which is producing some sort of order out of the chaotic state in which the Synoptic problem lay will have to be applied to these even more difficult questions. We know now fairly well certain main elements in the construction of the Synoptic Gospels. We know, too, that on most points the traditional theory as to their dates and authorship is being re-established. Quite clearly S. Luke wrote the Third Gospel. The connexion of S. Mark with the Second Gospel and its use of the reminiscences of S. Peter seem to be generally assumed, while there is just the same doubt now as there was in the second century as to whether the Gospel was written before or after the death of that Apostle. On the other hand it is clear that S. Matthew did not write the First Gospel, though there was in all probability a close connexion between it and a work due to him. The exact relationship has however not yet been settled. Opinion is coming more and more definitely to the belief that these three writings were composed within the twenty years A.D. 60-80, and the strange theories which have prevailed as to their historical or rather unhistorical character will be found every year to be less and less tenable.

But no one can say that there is any scientific accuracy yet introduced into the study of the Johannine question. An admirable example of unscientific theology is given to us by the fourth volume of the translation of Professor Otto Pfeiderer's work on Primitive Christianity. Those who are acquainted with his writings will know that there is no student of Early Christianity who is more woolly-minded than he. His methods of textual criticism, when he steadily picks out without regard to authorities the writings which suit his purpose, are a sign of this. Again and again in his argument his proof is dependent on the assumption that his conclusions are true. He has first of all constructed his theory of the development of Christianity, and then arranged his documents to suit it. If one tries to get behind his arguments, one finds that the chief reason for distrusting a writer is that he believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. There is little difficulty in proving to one's satisfaction that that belief is not true when one assumes that any writer who maintains it has modified his facts to suit his conclusions. Only this method of argument is not scientific, and it is important to realise that the sole unanimity in a certain type of modern critical theology lies in its conclusion which it has assumed as its starting point.

Professor Pfeiderer believes that the Fourth Gospel was written between the years 130 and 140 to combat Gnosticism. It is not an historical work, but uses historical material as a frame for the symbolic pictures in which it embodies the ideas of a Hellenised Paulinism. It always treats historical material simply as a symbolic expression of religious ideas. Almost every event recorded, therefore, may be explained symbolically. Of the changing of the water into wine it is said "This allegory truly contains such a pearl, the thought, namely, that Christ puts in the place of the insipid and powerless ceremonial system of Judaism (the water of the vessel of purification) the Gospel spirit of joy and power (wine) and by the fulness of this heavenly blessing has quenched all earthly need". The only comment we have to make is, how extraordinarily carefully the author has concealed his meaning. The five husbands of the woman of Samaria are the five religions of that country; the thirty-eight years of the sick man at the Pool of Bethesda are the thirty-eight years of Israel's wandering in the wilderness. Bethesda is the House of Grace, the five porches are the five books of the law, or the five parts of the Temple, and so on. We know that our

Lord drew symbolical teaching from recorded incident, we know that possibly the author of the Gospel did this for us in certain cases. But it is another thing to suggest that He invented stories to convey a spiritual meaning and never told us what that was. The method is not convincing. Still less so when we consider that the writer lays stress on historical teaching and even, according to Dr. Pfeiderer, "intended in all seriousness to write history". Nor does a careful examination of the Gospel corroborate the idea that it is for the most part invention.

An examination of special points does not strengthen our opinion of the scientific character of Professor Pfeiderer's book. Take the question of external evidence. Those who are acquainted with the history of opinion on this point will know how the latest date at which the book could be written has gradually been pushed further back. The result is that Harnack considers that the Gospel could not have been written later than about 100 A.D., and Dr. Moffatt ("Introduction to New Testament Literature"), who certainly does not show any conservative prejudices, tells us that the "marked sequences" of the Fourth Gospel "were familiar and popular in Asia Minor in the opening of the second century". Professor Pfeiderer's date is in fact on scientific grounds an impossible one. Nor will our opinion of his critical powers be increased by observing how he deals with separate portions of the evidence. It is well known how for a long time writers of the critical school tried to make us believe that the Diatessaron of Tatian was not formed of four Gospels. Ultimately its contents were discovered, and their opinions were shown to be absurd. Now this evidence is discredited as follows: "Tatian, the pupil of Justin, combined the four Gospels into a harmony (diatessaron), the material being taken chiefly from Matthew and John: the former, however, determines the order of the narrative, while the sections (Pericopes) of John were fitted into the synoptic scheme. From this it may be concluded that Tatian did not regard the Fourth Gospel as standing on the same footing as the Synoptic Gospels as a source for the history of Jesus, and therefore cannot have held it to be the work of the Apostle John". It is really difficult to follow this argument, as S. Matthew's Gospel, being clearly the most complete history, must in the main give the order of the narratives, and the natural deduction would be that Tatian considered S. John's Gospel equal in value to S. Matthew's and more important than the other two. Similarly with regard to Justin. It may be recognised that he certainly used the four Gospels. Professor Pfeiderer however tries to throw doubts on this; and then goes on to emphasise the fact that Justin "never cites it by name, whereas he does describe the Apocalypse as the work of the Apostle John", and therefore argues that he did not know it as a work of John. The whole value of this argument is lost when we remember that Justin does not cite by name any of the Gospels but describes them generally as "memoirs of the Apostles". Of course it would not have made any difference to Professor Pfeiderer if the Apologist had cited the Gospel by name, as he is quite certain that Justin is wrong in ascribing the Apocalypse to the Apostle. In fact we may take it for granted that evidence never really matters at all to Professor Pfeiderer. If Justin ascribes a work to S. John, he is no authority. If he happens not to mention S. John's name, it is proof that he did not think the work to be by S. John. The real fact is that the school to which Dr. Pfeiderer belongs adheres to an old-fashioned orthodox unorthodoxy which modern scientific methods render impossible and defends it by apologetic methods which rival those of Dr. Christopher Wordsworth.

Or let us take the tradition which tells us that the Apostle John lived to a great age and died at Ephesus. If testimony is of any value at all, that statement is strongly supported. The evidence is wide and varied; it includes Irenæus, Polycrates, Justin, Clement of Alexandria, and the Muratorian fragment. It appears to be supported by Gnostic tradition. The whole of this is now set aside on the grounds: First, that

confusion has arisen between John the Apostle and John the Presbyter; and secondly, that two obscure writers—Georgius Hamartolos, of the ninth century, and an eighth-century epitome of Philip of Side—tell us, apparently on the authority of Papias, that John the divine and James, his brother, were killed by the Jews. It is clear that there is some confusion, for this would imply that they were killed at the same time, and we know that John was living later when Galatians was written. Moreover, neither Irenæus nor Eusebius nor any of the other early writers who knew Papias knew anything of this statement. Such suppressio veri would not be possible where so many writers are concerned. But this late corrupt and doubtful testimony harmonises with certain modern critical prejudices, and is therefore accepted in the face of abundant early testimony on the other side. Sir William Ramsay ("The First Christian Century") says well: "If any writer on the opposite side had ventured to quote such worthless evidence he would have been laughed to scorn. Suppose that some ninth-century writer, full of inaccuracies and quite valueless in himself, agreed with an anonymous epitomiser of a poor fifth-century historian as to the correctness of some statement of the Acts, and that this agreement had been quoted as proving the correctness of that statement, what value would any writer of any school have attributed to the proof? We all know that such corroborations are valueless. It is only when writers like these can be tortured into an argument which seems to disagree with the New Testament that they are quoted".

We do not, of course, propose to discuss the whole Johannine question. It is far too intricate for the space at our disposal. It is interesting to learn, however, again on the authority of Dr. Moffatt, that the possibility or necessity of a Judean as well as a Galilean ministry is being more and more recognised, that research has established the existence of good topographical knowledge in S. John, that it is realised that the style and the type of thought are Semitic and Hebraic, not Hellenic. Again, how little stress can be laid on the argument of the silence of the Synoptists. In certain cases S. John covers the same ground as they did. Sometimes he corroborates, sometimes he amplifies, sometimes he seems to correct. He acts like an independent authority. In other cases he gives us independent information. Is there any ground for thinking that in this case he invents? The Synoptists at their fullest only gave us the events of a few weeks. It is a quite ungrounded assumption that the ministry of our Lord must be limited to a year. Did He never do anything except what the Synoptists relate? Does not each of them contain a large amount of independent information? The point we wish to emphasise is that there is an immense amount of assumption underlying the majority of the arguments used against S. John's Gospel. There is need for scientific treatment, and the work of the ordinary school of critics is not scientific or historical, but dogmatic, and the arguments by which it is defended have all the characteristics of apologetics.

The remainder of Professor Pfeleiderer's book does not call for much comment. Our purpose is to protest against the way in which a type of work which has long grown antiquated continues to be imposed upon the British public as the newest result of criticism, while its historical methods are accepted merely because they are useful to attack traditional Christianity.

"INFINITE DISPUTE."

"Commoners' Rights." By Constance Smedley. London: Chatto and Windus. 1912. 6s.

"Julia France and her Times." By Gertrude Atherton. London: Murray. 1912. 6s.

WHEN the Achitophel of Dryden's poem was gathering men to the standard of Absalom, he did not seek only for those who held common principles, nor did he call those alone who loved the young prince.

Every man who had a grievance was asked to aid every other who thought himself aggrieved. The years have done little to change these things; Absalom's army has altered somewhat in composition, but it has never been disbanded. Militant suffragists march side by side with mild votaries of nut foods, and the recruit with an antipathy to the Czar of Russia politely offers his rifle to the earnest preacher of disarmament. Between these two novels which we have been reading there exists just the link of discontent by which Achitophel and his successors have always striven to unite their motley forces. In some other respects they are as far apart as the Bank and Mandalay.

Miss Smedley holds forth on the small grievances of some people in a little town of Gloucestershire, but it must be owned that she writes with humour and conviction. She knows and loves this particular part of the countryside, and it is merely a personal matter if we cannot agree with all her conclusions, but there is a charm in her manner, which makes us regret that she does not leave politics entirely. Perhaps the author has herself sworn allegiance to Achitophel with some sorrow, or has done so with the pious hope that she may bring his ungainly crowd to some state of grace, for her heart seems often with David. In chapter after chapter can be seen her admiration for the old feudal system and all the picturesqueness of the past, and to the end she sighs that only the rags of these things remain. But she has no use for such poor remnants as still flutter with the winds, when the "People" are marching on. They must be aided to advance; they must be taught to be artistic. Æsthetic radicalism is her creed, and we agree that it is a pretty one, though we may lack the optimism needed for its recitation.

In "Commoners' Rights" the cause of the female suffragist was but touched on lightly, and it was certainly in moderate manner. In Mrs. Atherton's book, however, it forms the staple subject of discussion, and the methods employed in its advocacy are crude in the extreme. Three talented women are presented to our notice, and against these are ranged three husbands, of whom one is an elegant fool, one a vulgar fool, and one a dangerous lunatic. From these cases we are asked to infer that the dependence of woman on man is a wrong which cannot be remedied until the feminine part of the population obtains the right to vote. The author propounds her views with such wonderful seriousness, both through her characters and in long lyrical outbursts, that we are forced to believe that she writes in pure faith, ill as she succeeds in convincing an unbiased mind. When one of her married women decides that self-respect demands self-support, she promptly asks her husband for a loan of money with which to set up a bonnet shop. She insists on her own place in the sun, but she commands the man to follow at a respectful distance with a parasol. The picture is rather a funny one, but the humour is clearly unconscious. Only at the end does Mrs. Atherton realise her own lack of consistency, for she has plain scruples as to allowing Julia France, the militant suffragist, to yield herself to her young lover. Compromise seems to be reached when he says to her "Together we'll conquer the world", and readers are left to imagine that they both lived strenuously ever afterwards. For this somewhat lengthy novel the whole world has been taken as the scene, and feminism is not the only cause advocated in its wanderings. In the background some come to talk Socialism, but for the force which is to create a new heaven and a new earth we are given the Bahai religion, which, by the way, has gained a Mesopotamian popularity among the followers of Achitophel. The two books have certainly given us material for thought, for we are wondering if any plain man or woman will rise from reading them to resolve upon a crusade against crusades. "Commoners' Rights" may indeed attract a few friends by the simplicity of its appeal and by its occasional delicate satire. Miss Smedley at times reminds us of a clever artist in water colours, but Mrs. Atherton has been painting with a big tar brush.

SHORTER NOTICES.

"The Path of Empire." By Henry Page Croft M.P. London: Murray. 1912. 2s. 6d. net.

"The True Temper of Empire." By Sir Charles Bruce. London: Macmillan. 1912. 5s. net.

Mr. Page Croft says there is so much to be done and considered for the future that he has little time to look back at history: Sir Charles Bruce, on the other hand, looks back persistently, and even gets his title from Bacon "To speak now of the true temper of Empire: It is a rare thing and hard to keep". In a measure therefore these two books are supplementary. Sir Robert Bruce looks to the principles of Sovereignty and Liberty on which the Empire has been built up for a key to the future. He examines "the modern conscience" in its relation to dependent races and communities, and discusses in some detail the position of Indians within the Empire—a position which does not always mean either sovereignty or liberty. He does not despair of the future, but anticipates that the Durbar will correct the failure of the Imperial Conference in dealing with such questions as that of British Indians in the Transvaal, and will "enforce recognition of the political and economic interdependence of the United Kingdom, the Dominions, the Crown Colonies, and India". The political and economic interdependence of the various parts of the Empire is the text of Mr. Page Croft's volume. He shows, for instance, what Colonial Preference has meant to the workers of Great Britain, and what Imperial Preference would mean to the whole Empire. His book is an appeal for cohesion and union. "The senseless policy of drift must end and the British nations can afford no longer to wander aimlessly each upon its separate path." As Mr. J. Chamberlain says, in a brief but pointed introduction, "The difficulty of taking the path of Empire does not come from the Dominions".

"The Wonders of Plant Life." By S. Leonard Eastian. London: Cassell. 1912. 3s. 6d. net.

This is one of the pretty books about plants which the cheapness and superficial attractiveness of photography have brought so plentifully into being of late years. Their value lies in the fact that they do treat the plant as a living organism and direct attention to its various parts as possessed of functions instead of regarding them as marks by which they can be classified. Their weakness lies in the somewhat loose reasoning and easy teleological guesses of the original observers—Kerner, Lubbock, Schimper, even Darwin himself—whose accounts of plant adaptation when repeated at second or third hand become steadily more cocksure and remote from reality. What is wanted is a more rigorous analysis in which the cases contradictory of the theory are enumerated as well as the successes; if, for example, the presence of a bitter principle in plants is to prevent animals from eating them, we want a complete table of the plants containing such bitter matters, compared with an enumeration of those that are liable from their habitat to such attacks, and a statement of whether they are in fact thus attacked or not. It is in connexion with mimicry that the practice of recording hits and forgetting misses becomes most dangerous: it is so easy to attribute a purpose when one ought probably only to record a coincidence. For example, the willow herb is so called because the largest member of the genus found in this country possesses leaves like a willow, and somewhat of the habit of growth of young shoots of that tree; what are we to make of the fact that certain willow herbs contain the same rare bitter principle—salicin—as the willow? Mr. Senior's book is not unattractively written, but it is a piece of book-making pure and simple.

"Revue des Deux Mondes." 1er Mai.

M. Ollivier continues his studies of the Franco-German War of 1870. He deals this time with the battle of Forbach, sometimes known by the name of Spicheren. This battle, though much less bloody than that of Wörth, was perhaps equally decisive, for it helped to unnerve the French at the opening of the campaign, and it destroyed all confidence of the soldiers in their generals. It has generally been assumed that Bazaine was to blame, but it is quite clear he was not. When he was asked to do so he dispatched reinforcements, and if Frossart had not suddenly been panic-stricken and retreated without reason at the end of the day it is clear the Germans must have been badly beaten. In fact, Fate played for once into the hands of the French, who took no advantage of the chances offered them. They had a great excess of numbers at first, and might have driven the enemy back in confusion. Both these battles were brought on by German Commanders of Divisions, not by the Commander-in-Chief or even by the Commanders of Army Corps, who were far away.

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GENERAL LIFE ASSURANCE.

A SUCCESSFUL AND STEADY YEAR.

THE Seventy-third Annual General Meeting of the proprietors of the General Life Assurance Company was held on Wednesday, Mr. Alfred James Shephard (Chairman) presiding.

The Secretary (Mr. John R. Freeman) having read the notices, the Chairman said the Company had had a year of successful and steady business. The number of policies which had been issued was 155 in excess of those issued during the previous year, and, although the total amount assured was rather less, the new premiums were more, and, as they would be glad to know, the total premium income of the Company for the year showed an increase of £1,886. Remembering what a strong and ever-increasing competition there was for life assurance business, he thought the proprietors would agree with him that the return for the year was by no means unsatisfactory. He would further add that, during the four years of the current quinquennium which had now elapsed, the Company had issued 128 more policies, assuring an increased sum of £140,711 at new premiums of £10,125 in excess of those produced by the policies of the first four years of the previous quinquennium. This was very gratifying, as of course in insurance business the progress over an average of years would give a better idea of the real position than if the figures for a year only were given. In any one year exceptional circumstances must necessarily affect results. In other respects the report now before the meeting was very reassuring. The deaths still continued to be well below the average of those which might be anticipated by the tables of mortality, and sums paid were also substantially less than the amount provided for the claims of the year. The funds of the Company had increased, the rate of interest was slightly in excess, and he was glad also to add that the percentage of cost of the business done had decreased. He thought, therefore, the shareholders would agree with him that, from every point of view, the business was progressing on right lines. The directors continued to deal with all insurances in the same cautious manner which had always been adopted, their object being to secure good business rather than a large amount of business of a doubtful character. With regard to the suspense account it would be gratifying to the proprietors to know that it was very considerably in excess of the amount required to meet depreciation. This was a very hopeful feature, and when the quinquennium had to be dealt with would greatly assist them. He would leave the past and turn to the future. It was never wise to express the belief that, when next year the quinquennial accounts were made up, they would be able to declare a substantial bonus to the policy-holders. With the prospect of a bonus in front of them, it ought to be possible to secure a large accession of good assurances. This, at least, he could safely say—that in looking for business no one need have any hesitation in assuring any intending proposer that the position of the Company was thoroughly sound and its prospects good. He moved that "the report and accounts be adopted and circulated amongst the proprietors."

The Hon. R. C. Grosvenor, in seconding the motion, stated that he thought the proprietors might heartily congratulate themselves upon the present position of the Company.

The resolution was carried unanimously. On the motion of the Chairman, seconded by Lord Arthur Cecil, it was resolved: "That a dividend of 10 per cent. per annum be declared on the paid-up capital of the Company, payable in two half-yearly instalments to the proprietors whose names shall stand on the share register at June 30 and December 31, 1912."

OILFIELDS FINANCE.

TWO IMPORTANT COMBINATIONS.

A GENERAL MEETING of the holders of Ordinary shares in the Oilfields Finance Corporation, Limited, was held on Tuesday, for the purpose of considering and, if thought fit, passing extraordinary resolutions approving of an agreement made between the Company and the General Oil and Finance Corporation, Limited, whereby the Company agrees to sell its property, assets and undertaking for £137,500, payable in 62,500 fully-paid £1 shares and 125,000 £1 shares credited as 12s. paid, of a new company, to be registered under the name of the Oilfields Corporation, Limited, or some other suitable name. Mr. Richard Barnett (Chairman of the Company) presided.

The Secretary (Mr. J. W. Cresser) having read the notice convening the meeting.

The Chairman said: Only three months have elapsed since I had the pleasure of congratulating the shareholders in annual general meeting assembled on a strong financial position and a 25 per cent. dividend, but they have been months of strenuous and successful work. We have arranged two important combinations of capital, both of which I hope and believe will prove beneficial to all concerned. The first is the big Roumanian combine, with a capital of £1,750,000, in £1 shares. The new company embraces five concerns, including two of our own subsidiaries—Roumanian Consolidated Oilfields, Limited, and the Bana Moreni Petroleum Company, Limited. The name of the first-mentioned company has been adopted as a suitable title for the amalgamation. For some time past it has been a matter of common knowledge that, while some of the finest oil lands in Roumania were in the possession of certain English undertakings, the lack of adequate cash resources has sadly retarded their development and exploitation. It has seemed to the directors of the Corporation that the time is ripe for a union of British interests in that country which will conduce to greater efficiency in administration and management, and to the manifold economies which result from working on a large scale. There are, of course, amalgamations and amalgamations. Nothing is easier than to combine a number of undertakings on the basis of giving each of them all that it asks and adding so much for working capital. To follow that course here would have been merely to crystallise past mistakes and to perpetuate them in a new and more glaring form. A very different policy has been adopted in both of the amalgamation schemes which I commend to your notice to-day. The five Roumanian companies which have now made common cause under the aegis of the Oilfields Finance Corporation had before the amalgamation an aggregate paid-up capital of over £950,000. The surgeon's knife had been gently, but firmly, applied, and £200,000 of dead capital has been written off and replaced by £200,000 of fresh working capital. The result is that the new Roumanian Consolidated Oilfields, Limited, commences its career with a unique selection of proved oil lands, with a small but rapidly-growing production, with a refinery and pipeline, with a guarantee of £250,000 cash working capital, and with over £700,000 available for future issue as and when required. It would be difficult, I think, to imagine a more solid or more satisfactory position. Incidentally I may say that the painful but salutary surgical operation to which I have referred has not been in any sense at the expense of our own subsidiary companies. We are proud to believe that every £1 share issued from City House is intrinsically worth at least 2s., and, so far as this amalgamation is concerned, the belief has not been falsified. Roumanian Consolidated contributed no less than £85,000 of cash working capital to the common stock, and alone of the five companies came into the combine at a premium, while Bana Moreni came in at par. The prospects of the new company are most brilliant, and a cablegram just received from Roumania informs us that oil has been struck in one of the new wells (No. 12 Bana) at a depth of 889 feet, while two other wells of the combine in the same locality will probably be brought into production during the next few days. The No. 12 Bana has begun producing in quiet and satisfactory fashion. On Saturday and on Sunday in 24 hours' baling it produced 11 tons; yesterday (Monday) 16 hours' baling gave 10 tons, and the rate of production will gradually increase. I must tell you that the Bana No. 12 is within a few yards of our Moreni (Roumania) well No. 6, which has given us 2,500 tons of oil in the past few weeks, and is steadily producing to-day, and the Bana Moreni makes a very good contribution to the combine with this well which came into production on Saturday last. I have dealt at some length with the Roumanian amalgamation because it is the first opportunity which I have had as chairman of the Oilfields Finance Corporation to explain to you the genesis of an enterprise in which our Company is very largely interested. The amalgamation scheme which invites your attention this day is one of a somewhat different character. The General Oil and Finance Corporation, Limited, was, like our own Company, formed in April, 1910, but, owing to various causes, it had not achieved so large a measure of success. It is proposed to form a new company, under the name of the Oilfields Corporation, Limited (or some other suitable name), with a capital of £650,000, in £1 shares. Having regard to the large increase in the capital value of the assets of the Oilfields Finance Corporation, the Ordinary shareholders would receive a £1 share (12s. paid), in exchange for each £1 (5s. paid), in the existing Company, while the Deferred shareholders would receive a £1 share (fully paid) in exchange for every two Deferred shares. On the other hand, the shareholders of the General Oil and Finance Corporation would receive three shares of £1 each (15s. 4d. paid), in exchange for every four shares of £1 (15s. paid) in the present Company. When claiming their shares in the new company credited as 12s. paid the Ordinary shareholders of the Oilfields Finance Corporation would be asked to pay 1s. 4d. per share, thus making the shares 13s. 4d. paid; and it is proposed in the near future to call up the remaining 6s. 8d. in two calls of 3s. 4d. each, thus making the issued capital of the new company £375,000, in fully-paid shares of £1 each, of which over £100,000 will be cash working capital. Then £225,000 further shares would remain available for future issue as working capital and for the general purposes of the Company, and the subscription of £50,000 of this amount has already been guaranteed. I believe that the scheme of amalgamation is an equitable one, and may be fairly commended to the shareholders of both companies. As regards the Oilfields Finance Corporation, while the work of the past three months has been largely of a preliminary character, and calculated to result in large profits for the combined undertaking, the realised profits are sufficient to justify the directors in declaring the usual interim dividend at the rate of 10 per cent. per annum on the Ordinary shares. This will be paid for the period between January 1 and May 6—the date from which the proposed amalgamation takes effect. I will now call upon my colleague, Mr. Rutherford, to second the resolutions, which I will propose en bloc, and if there are any questions to be asked I will answer them to the best of my ability.

Mr. Watson Rutherford, M.P., seconded the resolutions. No questions were asked, and the Chairman then put the resolutions to the meeting, which were carried unanimously and without discussion. A meeting of the Deferred shareholders in the Company was then held, at which similar resolutions were also unanimously carried. The necessary operative resolutions were then submitted to an extraordinary general meeting of the Company, and were carried unanimously. The proceedings then terminated.

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